

or  
The Exploits  
of Sir Jack  
of Danby Dale

Sources









THE LAST OF THE GIANT KILLERS



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OF  
THE GIANT KILLERS  
OR  
THE EXPLOITS OF SIR JACK  
OF DANBY DALE

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## CHILDREN'S DEPARTMENT OFFICE

### PREFACE

THE first three or four of the following stories were written without any intention or thought of publication. The object for which they were written was the amusement of certain children belonging to diverse families, who were more or less interested in the district, a part of which Danby Dale is, and who knew that the author, when his own children were little, had often been asked and had responded to the request to tell them stories involving local scenery and local characters (however imaginary), as well as local myths or folk-tales.

Having, however, listened to the suggestion that it might be well to offer them for (as it is hoped) the delectation of a wider circle of youthful readers (if not auditors), he thinks it better to prefix a few explanatory, rather than only prefatory, remarks to the stories themselves.

In almost every instance what may be called the starting-point of the several stories depends upon, or is connected with, local legend, local fact (of whatever kind), or ‘local habitation.’ The Giant-casts, Giant building-works ; the King Arthur legend ; the legends of the Loathly Worm ; of the nightly destruction of the day-done work of Church-building, and the ultimate flitting of the materials to another site ; of the Barguest or Church-grim ; of the insatiable Hunter with his horses and hounds buried with him, and his doom to hunt for ever, or until the Day of Judgment ; of the other presentation of the same idea involved in the Gabble-ratchet notion ; of the underground passages from historic buildings ; of the guarded treasure reachable by some of them ; and the like, are—at least have been—not only as actually localised in this district as in any other in England or the northern Continent of Europe, but have been, nay, are still, more readily accepted and accredited than the great slides and falls of rock and earth from the moor-banks, or the former prevalence and sway of the Wolf in our forest fastnesses. For even the fact that, as late as 1395 the ‘tewing’ or dressing and tanning of fourteen wolfskins, in a lot, is charged for in the accounts of Whitby Abbey, while it is enough to suggest that, in remoter places such as the forest-begrown wilds of Danby and Westerdale, those pleasant neighbours must have had a ‘royal time of it,’ is still not enough to keep alive in the popular

mind the circumstance that the Woodales in those parishes were ‘dales’ named after the ‘wolf’ and not after the ‘wood,’ or that the many Wolf-pits, Wolf-hows, and so on, we still hear of about, are but the scanty remains of hosts of like-named places or objects.

Again, the popular mind, although the popular eye observes the ‘undercliffs’ in the Daleheads, and other like traces below the moor-bank, fails to take in the simple fact that these cliff-slips and down-fallings are patent and tangible facts, and that the bewildering properties and propensities of ‘Jenny-wi’-t-lantren’ are scarcely so; while the curious discovery of an ‘Ancient-British’ vase, possibly two thousand years buried, and within ten yards of it, only a year or two later, of two old-fashioned teapots, certainly entombed within the last two centuries, seemed to have but little in them to excite popular interest. And yet both these—the vase and the teapots—owed their burial and their preservation alike to bank-slips from above and the side of the great Glaisdale freestone quarry. And there was to me a something pathetic in seeing those old, discarded teapots (still good enough, however, to serve as children’s playthings), with other such-like ‘nursery toys,’ placed where children’s hands had placed them, for play-use another day, on the shelf in the rock-rift play-place, standing there to remind me that children who could find their

pastime in such ‘bairn-lakings,’ as old teapots, cockle-shells, phials, and so forth, and who listened with an *empressement* we can hardly allow for now, to tales of Fairy, Hob, Witch, Grim, and Giant, should themselves have been the witnesses of, and in a sense the sufferers by, just such a rock-fall as, by many, will be regarded as simply a *tour de force* in the opening story of the following series.



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## HOW LITTLE JACK CAME TO BE CALLED JACK THE GIANT-CRUSHER

DID you ever hear of a place called Danby?  
Do you know where it is?

I think it must be a very outlandish sort of place; for I once heard an old ship-captain say it was not found out till after the battle of Waterloo. Still, I think he must have been wrong about that: because in books that were written three hundred years ago, or more than that, it used to be called *Danbeium nemus*, which is Latin, I believe, for Danby Forest. Sometimes, too, as I have heard, it used in those days to be called Danby in, or Danby on, the forest. So that one may feel quite sure that the old sailor was wrong about its not having been discovered sooner.

But if it was in the forest, as the old name says, may it not have got hid, as it were? I know myself

that it was not easy to find ; because I remember a long time ago, when I was looking for it as hard as I could, and went the way people told me to go, for quite a long time I never seemed to get any nearer to it ; and at last, when I was thinking I could not be very far away from it, a lady, who seemed to come up suddenly—for I had never seen her or heard her till she was quite close to me, although I had been looking about every way for some one to inquire of—riding on quite a nice pony, told me to go ever so much farther. So I felt sure at once there must be something strange about the place somehow. And when I did find it at last, it was just as if it was hiding itself away ; for it was all in deep narrow valleys—so narrow and so deep, that in some parts of them even the sun himself could not find his way in during the deepest and darkest parts of winter. That is quite true, I know ; because I have myself seen the white frost lying unmelted on the roof of a house in one part, in the afternoon of a very bright sunny day ; and all because the sun had not been able to find his way in, up there in that far dale, and down to the depths of it where the house stood. And so he could not get in and melt the hoar-frost.

It does seem strange, I allow, that a place should even seem to try and hide itself away. But then, you know, there might be reasons for it. It might be that it had got a bad name, and wanted not to

be easily found out. Or it might be that, because it was hard to find, certain folks or beings or creatures had chosen it to live in, because it suited the sort of lives they led. And it so happens that there used to be an old man who might often be seen walking about in those deep hide-away valleys or dales, who was in the habit of saying that he knew some strange, terrible stories of what used to go on there ; that, once upon a time, it was a terrible place for little boys and girls to have to live in, because dreadful things had happened to them there in the old far-away days, before all the giants had been made an end of. For everybody knew that the real old sort of giants were very fond of children, before they got too big and tough, for breakfast or lunch ; and that, even yet, long pointed objects which might be seen about in the fields, which were giants' teeth, and huge joints of their backbones were still to be met with. Really and truly they must have come out of some huge creature ; and the old giants were much the most likely.

But what was more than this—though the bones and the teeth were a good deal ; because seeing is believing, as everybody knows—there were places about with such names that there could be no doubt the old man was right in what he said. There was the Giant's Chamber, or Cave as some people called it, or the Dungeon as others did, in the great rocky cliffs of the Crag Wood. Then

there was Beanley Bank ; and on the other side of Danby, Jack Ing. Of course the Giant's Cave spoke for itself. And as to Beanley Bank, nobody could help remembering the story of Jack and the Beanstalk, and this was the very place where he planted his bean ; and close by was the place where the giant fell lumbering down when Jack chopped the stalk through, and where all that mass of broken rocks on the hillside remained to show what a dreadful heavy fall it had been. And if Jack himself had been at home somewhere thereabouts, why Jack Ing was accounted for at once.

There was no such thing, of course, as standing against such reasons as these. Only, the old man always said that though Jack Ing was called so because of a certain Jack, or Little Jack, as he was first of all generally called, still it wasn't the same Jack as planted the bean ; though he might be, and indeed he was, some far-off relation of his, and, besides that, born in the same family that Jack the Giant-killer had belonged to. And what was more worthy of being noticed still, this Danby Jack, or Little Jack, was the last little boy left in the whole dale.

The fact was that Jack's mother's cottage had stood—one might almost say had been hid away—in the place called Jack Ing. And it was put there, or hidden away so, because the poor old lady was so dreadfully afraid lest the Giant who infested the

country at that time should find her little son and gobble him up just as he had done with all the other children in the dale.

Really and truly this Giant was the last of the stock, and his home had been in the Giant's Chamber, or the Dungeon ; and he had not only made a practice of devouring children, but was a burden to the countryside in many another way besides ; and, worse than all, there seemed no sort of chance or hope of putting a stop to his shocking proceedings ; there seemed no way of ever catching him asleep, or otherwise taking him at unawares.

Everybody knows very well that the family of giants was always apt to be a queer set of folks as regarded the matter of their eyes. Some of them had three eyes ; one on each side, and one in the middle as well, only high up in the forehead. And then there were the giants with only one eye, one of whom named Polyphemus played Ulysses and his companions such a dirty trick ; only Ulysses was one too many for him, and by a cunning device poked out his one eye with a burnt stick. And then again there was the old English family of giants with one eye each, set in the very middle of their foreheads. But this old Giant that harried Danby so shockingly, besides being one of the one-eyed stock, with his eye in the middle, right up above the bridge of his nose, had this strange feature different from all his big,

cruel, monstrous relations ; namely, that he could take his eye out, when he did not want to use it himself, and put it somewhere else.

Not want to use it himself ! Well, that does sound a little strange. All ordinary people, even with two good eyes, always ‘want their eyes themselves.’ And yet, when one comes to think about it, you may say that people don’t ‘want their eyes’—that is, don’t want the use of their eyes—when they are fast asleep and dreaming. One can surely take a nap, and snooze, and even snore quite loud without any help from his eyes. And besides, if little boys and girls with very good and sharp eyes are fast asleep, their eyes are of no use to them even although a very hungry giant were coming close to, and going to clutch them. And so, you see, this horrid old Giant we are talking about might not and would not want his one eye himself when he was just off for a sound sleep, such as giants have to sleep.

But this old Giant had need to be very wide-awake, and knew he had. You may be quite sure he knew all about Beanstalk Jack, and the scurvy trick he had played *his* giant. And he couldn’t help knowing about Jack the Giant-killer, and the mischief he had worked to giant after giant. And besides, he had got more than a notion, more than a hint even, that there was still a Little Jack left in the country, and that he

was just as sharp, and just as willing to do for a lumbering ravenous giant as either of the other Little Jacks had been. And I believe our Little Jack's mother was quite aware of this, and that this was what made her so frightened of the Giant's finding her little boy.

Anyway, this Giant—but I ought to tell you his name. He was called Grim—sometimes they called him old Grim; sometimes Crag Grim, from the place he lived in; and sometimes Greedy Grim, or just plain Giant Grim. Anyway, as I was saying, Greedy Grim knew he could not afford to be caught napping; and so he had hit upon the craftiest dodge you can well think of: especially when you remember that these bulky old brutes were generally as thick-witted as they were thick-waisted. He had got himself a stick, a walking stick, you know, which he never went anywhere without. It was not a very big one, nor even a very tall one, for such a giant as he was. He chanced to see a tree one day, with its top blown off, and the rest of it nearly blown out of the ground. The stump that was left was about four times as tall as a tall man, and with a bulging boll such as to supply a stunning knob. This he pulled quite out of the ground, and trimmed the broken roots off as neatly as you can suppose a giant doing it, and all the side boughs as well. Next he fashioned the swelling root-end into a

rough likeness of a round bald skull, and one side of it into just such a face as one sometimes sees on a corbel stone on a church. This was his walking stick ; and in the rough, crumpled, crinkly-crankly part that came where the forehead was meant to be, he had cut a deep hole like the long half of a monster egg-shell, only with corners at the ends. And the use of this hole was, that when he went to sleep himself, he took his own one eye out of the socket in his forehead, and put it into the socket cut for it in the head of his big knob-stick. And then, when the eye was properly let in, the stick itself became quite wide-awake, and kept so all the time its master lay asleep ; and if anything or anybody came near while the Giant was taking his nap, the stick began to peg and thump and hammer about on the rock-floor of the cavern Grim lived in, fit to wake King Arthur and all his knights, and much more a crabby suspicious old giant such as this one was. Because, as I have told you, he was dreadfully afraid that there might, nay, that there really was, another Jack somewhere, just hiding up and waiting till he could find a convenient opportunity to do for him as all his kith and kin had been done for.

And really he wasn't so very far wrong about it. Our 'Little Jack' knew all about his far-off cousin, Jack the Giant-killer, and his nearer cousin Jack of the Beanstalk, quite as well as you do, you may be

sure ; and most likely better. And besides, his mother had told him plenty about the poor little boys and girls old Grim had gobbled up, and how, if he could only catch him, Jack, there would soon be an end of him the same way. So he was beginning to lay plots and plans, and was watching and spying and scheming to see if he could not find out some way of outwitting and over-mastering this horrid old boy-eater. Moreover, he had had some very narrow escapes when he had been peeping about, and hiding up so as to be able to see how the Giant carried on when he was at home, or just going out or coming in. One day it happened like this : he had hid himself between two big stones that lay not very far away from the opening into the Giant's Cave, all grown over with blaeberry wires and ferns and ling, so that he was very well concealed. But old Grim, who could smell the blood of an English boy just as well as all his relations and foreelders could 'smell the blood of an Englishman,' happened to nose him as he stooped down in order to get into his rocky chamber ; and such a search there was. Once his great huge foot was set down right on to the stones between which Little Jack was lying hid, and they began to crumble and crack right over his poor little head ; and one cruel bit, with a very sharp corner, fell in upon him, and cut a nasty jaggy gash just above his forehead, and the blood ran down all over his face. And the Giant

smelt it too, and began to hunt about worse than ever. It was a lucky thing for Jack that Grim's big old hoof had cracked and broken the edges of the rocks that hid him so well. Because when Grim saw all the breakage he hadn't the least bit of a notion that a boy could be hidden under such a heap of crushed rock and broken bits of stone as was lying just under his nose. At last, when he could not find a thing anywhere, either like or not like a living boy, he went off to his cave with a growl and a snarl: and you may be sure Jack wasn't long, when once he saw his enemy stoop and put his head inside the great hole in the rocks where he lived, in getting out of his hiding-place and running as hard as he could to a spot where the Giant couldn't follow him, even if he heard him running or perhaps saw him out of the corner of his eye. Jack would have liked to stop, because he thought that Giant Grim, being vexed and angry, would perhaps not have been quite so dodgy and shifty as he generally seemed to be when he got home, partly as if he was afraid that somebody might have got into his cave-house when he was away, and partly as if he was afraid of being watched there; and because he knew, too, how it had fared with his giant relations in that sort of way. However, on this occasion, Jack thought he'd better be cautious.

But I don't think I have ever told you yet anything very particular about the place where the Giant

lived, or what was the making and fashion of it. I have only told you that it was called the Giant's Cave or Chamber, and that it was in the great mass of rock, so many feet high, that you can see even yet towering up above the great mass of what we call the Crag Wood. No doubt it would puzzle a very clever person, much cleverer than you and I are, to find a hole in the rocks there now very much bigger than a fox might want to creep into. It is a fact, however, that the foxes do creep into a hole there when the hounds are silly enough to go thither to hunt them, and that hole just where the Giant's Chamber used to be. And my idea is that they have got a jolly big place inside for their young ones to play about in when it is too wet or too stormy for them to come out and play about outside the hole. And, indeed, just a little outside the hole you may see a great square sort of a stone, as big as a cottage house almost; and on that stone very often, when the silly hounds are known to be coming, some of the gamekeeper's men light a great blazing fire of dead boughs and stumps of trees that will be sure to burn half the day through, just on purpose to frighten the foxes away if they should happen to run that way when being hunted. Well, for all there is such a little outside hole there now, in old Grim's time there was a great tall opening in the side of the cliff or crag, almost as high as the church-tower, and when you had passed in some two or three yards the

hole widened out on both sides and went hollow upwards as well ; while to the back from the front it was as wide as the old church itself. So you may fancy it was about big enough to give shelter even to such a monstrous old animal as Giant Grim actually was.

There was no light came in anywhere except at that tall opening which the Giant used for a doorway, and which, though it was not tall enough to let him get in without stooping his hunchy old back, was yet wide enough to let him, overgrown as he was, walk in without turning sideways ; and so, a deal of the space inside was as dark as dark, especially the corners on each side of the opening or doorway. Inside, but not quite exactly opposite the doorway, was another great square bit of rock, as big as, if not bigger than, the one outside—the one you know which they use to light the fox-fires on—and this was used by the Giant as his dinner table. All along one side of the cave there was a sort of ledge of rock, a little higher than the floor of the cave ; and at the end of it nearest the door was a sort of step of stone the whole width of the ledge, which served the Giant as a pillow. And, though you will hardly believe it, there was quite a hollow worn into it by his knobbly old head lying so rough and heavy on it. Just beside this pillow, and between it and the doorway, there was a big slab of stone standing up on its edge, as if to keep the

draught off the Giant when he was abed. And it was against this slab that the Giant always rested his walking-stick when he went to bed, first putting his one eye into the socket in the head of the stick that I told you of. You remember, too, that I told you the stick used to kick up an awful pounding and hammering if any possibility of danger seemed to be approaching while Grim was asleep. Well, of course all this pounding and banging had made quite a hole in the floor where the foot of the stick used to stand, and also up above where its great ugly head rested against the inside wall of the cave, because, as you see, it could not keep its head still while its foot was all the time punching out a hole in the floor. And so you see again there was another great hole butted into the wall above besides the one pounded into the floor.

But, besides all this, just at the upper edge of the standing slab of stone I mentioned just now, and so close to the hole that the head of the stick had made that it was not farther off than your hand is from your shoulder, and all too in such a dark part of the cave, there was a hollow place just big enough to take a not very big boy in, and hide him so that nobody without a candle could possibly find him. And I don't think that old Grim ever used candles in that draughty cavern of his.

Now I have been very particular in telling you all about these things to help you to understand how

Little Jack framed (managed, contrived) at last to master the Giant, and put a stop to his lunching or dining on the little girls and boys of the dales. For it was he, Little Jack himself, who gave this particular, and of course equally true, account of the inside of the cave : for he found his way in, crafty little chap that he was, two different times. The first of these times he got to see and learn all he wanted to know. And he found that mainly a good part of it was very much what he had come to fancy it might be in consequence of all his watchings and spyings outside. And then he laid his little plans accordingly ; and those plans, though you will stare when I tell you so, depended on nothing less than robbing the Giant of his eye !

Now I suppose that nobody can walk about these dales, and especially along the moor-banks that shut them in on both sides, without noticing how hundreds of stones and great pieces of rock have rolled down those steep banks in the old days. Nay, there are places in different parts of the Dales where one who looks can see for himself that, some time or other, there is safe to be a great fall of rock and earth from some shaky place in the moor-edge. Why, there's a place in little Fryup Side, just up above Crossley Side House, where there is a great crack which has been getting wider and wider for these fifty years, showing that the side of the hill just up at the top is splitting away from the moor above, and that the

slice that is splitting off will surely, after some long time, go rushing down into the dale below, like a great overpowering avalanche of earth and rocks and stones. Perhaps even some of the stones will go bounding down as low as Crossley Side Farm itself. Now I am able to tell you that our Little Jack's plan depended partly on just such a chance as this. For he had noticed exactly such a crack or splitting above the crag a little on one side of the entrance to the Giant's den ; and he saw too that no long time would pass before it all went down together, though old Grim, stupid and blunder-headed, as all those big lumbering giants always were, had never given it a moment's notice. And more still than that deep split. Jack had seen, one day when he was scrambling up a jaggy, steep, screwy little trackway he had found for himself close by, that in one place the roots of a big old tree crossed the crack in two or three places, and that more than one of the weakest were newly broken, as if they had been strained more than they could stand ; and so he thought —But I'll tell you what he thought presently.

Well, Jack had contrived to find out that Greedy Grim, now that boys and girls were so scarce, fancied a calf as much as anything for his dinner ; and he liked a white wye, or heifer calf, best of all : for he said they were tenderer, and his teeth were not so sharp and good as they had been. And when he had picked all the big bones—he ate all the little

ones clean up, you know—he used to lie down on his rocky bed and have a good sleep.

Now it happened that, one day, very soon after his visit to the inside of the cave, Jack, being as usual on the watch, saw old Grim nearly a mile off, coming loping along with a white calf under each arm. Jack knew where he had got them ; for they were twins, both wyes and both white, and he had been to see them at neighbour Higgs's just after they were calved. ‘Now’s my chance,’ thought Jack ; ‘for after a meal like that he’s safe to have a good nap.’ And away he bundled as hard as he could, so as to be able to get into his hiding-place near the hole made by the head of the walking-stick. And he had just got into it and snugly hid, when the old Giant came up and flung his two calves down on the ground close by the door.

As luck would have it, the Giant was so hungry he set to work to prepare the calves for cooking directly ; or else, you know, he might have smelt Little Jack out. But pulling the logs of his fire together—for he always made it well up before going out to hunt for his victuals for the day—he had the two calves hung up and twirling over it before you could say anything half as short as ‘Jack Robinson.’

Well, I daresay you don’t want to hear how he ate his dinner, and enjoyed it ; or how he made his hands and mouth want washing rather, in eating it ; and so I shall only tell you that exactly as Jack had foreseen,

he went straight to his bed: for he had been obliged to unbuckle his belt long before. But as soon as ever he got to his bedside, as was likely he would, when you remember where little Jack had hid himself, he 'smelt the blood of an English boy!' And he felt sure there was an English boy close by, too! And it was more than lucky for Jack that he had eaten all the seave-lights he had got at Mother Higgs's when he had gone there and taken the two calves. For it is plain enough that if he had brought them home to baste his veal with as he was cooking it, and had saved only one, and had lighted it to look for the English boy with, then he would have found Jack directly and without any sort of trouble. You may fancy what a fright poor Little Jack was in when he heard the old brute muttering, 'I can smell the blood, I can smell the blood, the blood, the blood of an English boy; and I'll have him, I'll have him for my supper as sure as a gun,' and knew that all the while he was feeling about, and searching every crack and cranny, big enough to hold a rabbit, and much more a Jack of Jack-the-Giant-killer breed. But fortunately he was just a little too particular in searching all the cracks and crannies low down in the wall, however small they might be; and so, by the time he had got within half a hand's breadth of Jack's hiding-place, and when Jack thought the next sweep of his horrid old paw would cover over his lair, Grim had

become so sleepy he could not carry on any longer, and hitting his head a great knock, as he nodded, against the rock wall—which hurt the rock but only waked him up a little—he sat down on his pillow and began to fumble about with his stick and his eye ; for he was not too sleepy to forget that little piece of business.

And now Jack's chance was coming. Trembling, partly from the fright he had been in, and indeed was in still, and partly with apprehensions about the success of his plan, he got ready for action as well as he could. There was the stick on one side, all but touching him. There was old Grim sitting on his hard pillow-end, and fumbling with his eye, and he was so sleepy with his hearty dinner he fumbled more than usual ; and Jack knew that he must catch the eye before Grim got it into the head of the stick. And if he didn't, or missed his snatch, why then, good-bye to poor Little Jack ! So there he was perched like a bird in its nest, quite cool though very anxious, watching all the sleepy monster's movements ; for, now that his eyes had got accustomed to the darkness of the cavern, he could see what was going on in what was, after all, only a sort of semi-darkness surrounding the place where the Giant sat.

Presently he saw a dim sort of fishy light—just like what is given out by stale fish in a quite dark room—and it began to move upwards and towards him with a slow, unsteady motion. He knew this

was the eye in its owner's hand being lifted up towards the head of the stick. Next he could just see enough to make out that it was held between the forefinger and the middle finger ; and then he took courage, for he felt sure he could grab it more easily so, than if it had been held between the finger and the thumb. Up it came, a foot at a time, and Jack's heart beat so, he almost fancied the Giant might hear it. Now it was level with Jack's eyes. A moment more, as it still rose, and it would be close to the socket in the head of the stick. And then in a flash Jack made his snatch, got the eye by the tag at the end that served to keep it fast in the wooden socket, and was sliding down the side of the partition-stone as if he had been bred a lamplighter, and was off like a shot round the corner towards the Crag ; partly because he was sure that the Giant, on getting outside the cave and trying to follow him, would naturally go the downward path ; and partly besides, because he had another plan which he hoped and thought would be likely to work if he made his way up that steep clambery path I told you of. His one great fear was, that the Giant might stop to listen directly he got outside, and so might hear him as he scrambled up ; and that then his nose, which Jack knew well enough to be a little frightened of, might enable him to catch him like a fly on the window, if he had not succeeded in climbing far enough to be out of his reach. So, when Jack

heard his old enemy come lumbering and roaring out of the cave, he waited stock still, being only about five yards up the cliff. But Grim never paused, only went on along the usual track feeling about with his long hands and fingers, hoping to catch the daring little thief who had played him such a pestilient trick.

Well, what do you think Jack did when he saw what the Giant was up to? He began his climbing again from the place he had halted at, making all the noise he could, and even contriving to kick down a good big stone or two, one of which actually hopped on to the back of old Grim's hand as he felt about near the ground. In a minute or two, when he had climbed high enough to be quite out of reach, even if the Giant were standing at the very foot of the cliff, he began to whistle and crow and yell as loud as he could. Grim heard him, you may be sure, and knew it was not only the voice of a boy, but of the very boy he had said he meant to have for supper. And he thought in a moment too, 'Ah! I shall have my supper after all; for he can't get away that way. And won't I grind the little rascal's bones when I catch him!' But as he was making all the haste he could to where he heard Jack's hullabaloo, you may guess if he didn't dance with rage—only his dancing was something queerer and clumsier than any bear's you ever saw—when he heard Jack begin to sing at the very top of his voice—

There you go with your eye out,  
And your nose in a sling ;  
And a Giant, his eye without,  
Is only a plainish thing !

I am sure there is no need for me to try and tell you what a rage he was in, and how he caught up stones and earth and sods, whole sheets of them, and flung them where it seemed to him the singing came from. But Jack knew he was safe, and kept on singing and mocking him all the same ; and at last he was impudent enough to invite the enraged old monster to come to the foot of the cliff and he—Jack—would reach down his hand and help him to climb up !

This riled Grim worse than anything yet, and roaring out that he would soon ‘be after the japing little ninnymammer,’ he blundered quite close up to the foot of the crags.

Now this was just what Jack had schemed for ; and as soon as he had enticed his foe fairly below him, having already got his big pocket-knife, with half a dozen blades and corkscrew and pricker, out of his pocket all ready, with the saw-blade open, he began to work away like mad at the root he had been watching now for some time ; and before he had sawed half-way through — CRASH ! SNAP !! BANG !!! went the root, and GROAN ! GRIND !! RUMBLE !!! ROAR !!! SHUDDER !!! SMASH !!! as if a hundred big castles and churches, with two or

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three towns chucked in to help the din, went all the front of the cliffs toppling and tumbling down together in one almighty SMASH !

And when Jack got back his senses a little, and his ears began to throb and ache a little less, and his eyes to recover their power of seeing, and the dust and leaves and twigs that had been thrown up into the air like a cloud by such an undeniable smithereen-business as this land-slip had been, had settled down a little, so that he was able to look down below once again, there he saw that tumbled mass of rocks and earth that we all look upon when we go there, only so beautifully grown over now with birch-trees and holly-trees and ferns, some of them six feet high and more. But *then*, it was all rough, raw ruin, rocks and earth in one huge unimaginable ruin and confusion and desolation. But just in one particular place Jack could see the toe of a great big brogue, and he somehow a sort of guessed that the foot which used to wear it was a little bit farther in, and that the old monster it belonged to had eaten his last little boy or girl, or indeed white wye either.

And this was the last of the giants in these parts, and that the exact way he came by his end. And I think you now know why Little Jack came to be called always after this Jack the GIANT-CRUSHER.



## HOW LITTLE JACK CAME BY HIS STAFF

THE day that Little Jack had succeeded in doing for old Grim, as we heard in the last story, it was so late before he got home that his poor old mother grew quite uneasy about him, and began to think he must have been caught by the Giant, and most likely gobbled up some time since. It really was late, for the sun had gone down almost an hour before he got to his mother's cot; and when he did at last get there, he seemed quite strange and dazed-like, and his face was all bruised and bloody, and he was covered from top to toe with sand and dust and dirt. He had besides got a great jelly-like object covered all over with leaves in his hand, as far as she could make out. Only he would not let her touch it, or even so much as look at it, with his good will. And he grew like one beside himself when she

tried to unwrap it and see what it was. She asked him question after question, but instead of giving her proper answers, he seemed as if he did not understand her, or almost as if he was listening to something else and not to the words she spoke to him. One side of his face was, as I said just now, badly cut and bruised, and she began to think he must have been 'knocked silly' by a bad blow on his head. At last, however, she got him to take a drink of milk, and to let her wash the clotted blood and dirt off, and bandage up his poor damaged face. Then she got him to the little box-like corner where his bed was. But he held on to the strange jellyfish-looking thing he had in his hand when he came in, as if he would part with his hand sooner than lose it.

But though he went to bed he did not go to sleep, but only lay very quiet. And so, after an hour or two, his mother went to bed too, although she kept herself awake on purpose to see after him if he seemed to want anything. But all he wanted really was to hear her snoring, for he did want her fast asleep. The old woman always said she did not go to sleep, she only shut her eyes. But I think that in reality she must have had her 'forty winks,' or perhaps only thirty-five. For certainly when she next knew anything about Jack, it was that he was out of his corner, and in front of the smouldering turf-fire, busy tying up

a biggish blown bladder she had hung up to dry that very day. When he had done this very carefully—and the old dame was sure enough about the carefulness—he went back to his box, and she heard the rustle of the partly dry bladder, just as if he was putting it cannily away in the furthest and darkest corner. After that, as he kept himself perfectly quiet, she soon really fell asleep herself.

When she woke up in the morning, there was Jack already up and dressed. To be sure he had but little besides his hose and his shoes to get on, for he had little other clothing to put on besides a small smock-frock, made out of an old one of his father's, and as good a fit as the poor old woman could make it. He had a very black eye and a horrid-looking ragged gash across his cheek, but he was as fresh as paint himself, at least so he said, and more than ready with an appetite for breakfast. And while she was getting it ready, he told her about his adventure with the Giant, and how it had ended. And besides, he told her how, when the big crash began, something, he did not know what, had flown up and hit him a bad blow in the face. And partly that, and partly the awful crash and roar and thunder and tumult of the falling crags had stunned him ; and he thought he must have lain on the brink of the new-made cliff-face more than an hour or two. And he ended up all his story by saying : ‘ Mother, I have lost

my beautiful new knife, with all those blades in it, and I must just go and look for it as hard as I can.'

Well, she tried to persuade him to stay at home and take care of himself that day; at all events; and the answer he made was that he would wait a day or two yet, till he got back his own head and legs and feet, for those he had didn't seem to belong to him anyhow. All the same he knew she would never keep herself quiet long, but would be all agog to go and tell the wonderful news to her neighbours and gossips far and near. And presently seeing her occupied this way with Willy Berier, he stole out himself with the bladder in his hand, and went up the deepest and darkest part of the gill, in the opening of which his mother's cot was hid, and he did not come back again for a couple of hours or more.

I daresay you don't want to be told how often he had to tell the story of his watching, and spying, and planning, and scheming, and succeeding at last. And all I shall say is that he was never, either now or later, the least given to boasting.

Well, days and weeks, and even a month or two passed on, and you may be sure Jack's fame did not grow less. And he grew to be such a queer little boy—at least, so folks said—for he was always mooning about by himself, about and among the fallen mass of rocks which were lying close by where

the Giant's Cave had been. He said, if anybody asked him, he was looking for his lost knife. His mother began to wonder if really he was not gone a little wrong in his head, and if he went up into the dark head of the home-gill to 'look for his knife' there also. Because he seemed to go there whenever he was more disappointed than usual about not being able to find that much-bewailed whittle of his.

There were other queer things about him and his ways besides. He never played with the other children; for now that they were safe from the devouring Giant, two or three families, with troops of children, had come into the dale to live there; and besides that, he never grew any bigger. He was going to be Little Jack for good, that was quite clear. I think it must have been that all that horrible din of the falling rocks, and the shock of it all, stopped his growth.

Now, I daresay you are all craving to know whether, with all that looking for it and all, Jack ever found that knife of his; or again, what he went so often into that dark gill for.

And, really, I was just coming to that; and perhaps some of you will think it the strangest part of my story; but all the same it is quite as true as any of the rest. When Jack came to himself the day he crushed the Giant, he found that, somehow or other, he had kept fast hold of

the Giant's eye all the time. He looked at it wondering, and thought it did not look nice, and that perhaps he had better throw it away. But in some odd way, he did not seem to like that thought when he came to consider the matter a little. Then he thought he would bury it, and that its grave should be close by where old Grim lay so well happed up, he'd never trouble any one again. And yet he didn't seem to like that plan any better than the first. Then he thought he would throw it into the beck for the fishes to eat. But no ; that plan did not do either. And so it was with half a dozen other schemes that came into his head ; there was always an objection to every one of them, and it regularly bothered Jack to think where all these objections came from. He did not seem to think them himself ; and yet it looked as if he *did* think them himself—they came into his mind so quick and clear. At last he thought to himself 'Well, I'll take it, fishy as it looks, home with me,' and in a crack, there was another thought, just as if it had jumped right into his mind ready-made from some other body's mind, 'Ah ! that's the right thing.' 'Well,' thought Jack, 'that's uncommon queer ; whatever is the meaning of it ?' And then he looked at the eye, and what do you think ? He felt, as well as saw, that the eye was looking at him. Well, you may guess he was pretty well scared. His first thought

was to shy it away as far as ever he could, and cut and run as if the Giant himself were after him. But the second, which came so sharp after the first that he hardly knew it *was* the second, was, ‘No, don’t.’ And then he looked at the eye again, and this time the look back did not seem to be quite altogether frightful. To be sure, it made him feel queer ; but he did not feel creepy all over as he did the first time. Then again, the next time he looked, the eye seemed to look back at him quite pleasantly ; and so he bethought him all at once, ‘Why the eye was just as quick, and just as wide awake in the head of the Giant’s stick as it had been in Grim’s own head.’ And in a second or two he thought again, ‘Perhaps the eye might be as useful to me as it was to that horrid old monster !’ ‘That’s just it,’ flashed into his head so quick, that the new notion must have trod on the heels of the foregoing one. Well, to shorten my story as much as I can, Jack thought the best thing he could do was to wrap the eye up very gently in two or three big, smooth, cool leaves, and take it home with him, with the greatest possible care ; and before he had got home, he had come to an understanding in the same sort of rather mysterious way, that he was to keep it from getting dry, and, as far as he could, in a fairly dark place ; and if it was near a little cascade, or a nicely dripping bed of moss, so much the better.

But what puzzled him most was, How it was going to be any use to him. If he always had to think of half a score of wrong things first, in order to be set straight time after time till he got to the right one, ‘Why,’ he thought, ‘that will be no better than “spirit-rapping.” And that *is* slow.’

Now, one day when he was thinking things of this sort, with the eye and its damp soft bladder-jacket in his hand—for that was what he went into the gill for so often, just to see that all was right with his prize—it came into his head to think, ‘Suppose I had a big stick with a monstrous head to it, and made the right sort of a hole in it for the eye to fit in? Ay, but then it would have to be such a big one, I never could carry it.’ In less than the time taken by the twinkling of an eye, three little short thoughts jumped into his mind, and they were ‘Yes,’ ‘No,’ ‘Nonsense.’ Jack, as you may suppose, was fairly bothered, but giving the eye a last look, he could not help noticing that the eye looked quite pleasant at him. All the same, he went home fairly bothered and utterly perplexed.

Indeed, he was so bothered and perplexed he quite lost his appetite. He couldn’t eat any dinner, and he wouldn’t have his goat’s-milk supper; and when he got to bed he could not rest. His mother had raved at him for not eating, and asked him if he remembered what had befallen that naughty Augustus who wouldn’t eat his soup, and yelled

that they should ‘take the nasty soup away’? But Jack hardly heard a single word of it all. And in his box-cot all he could think of was ‘Yes,’ ‘No,’ ‘Nonsense.’ Whatever could it mean?—‘YES.’ Well, that might mean that the first part of his thought was right, and that had been about a thick stick with a big head. And ‘No,’ that might mean, and very likely did mean, the second part of what he had thought, and that was about his making a socket for the eye himself. And if the ‘No’ applied to that, where would be the good of a knob-stick at all? And as to the last word, that tiresome ‘NONSENSE,’ whatever could that mean? Why, of course, such a stick as it would have to be in order to accommodate such an eye, would be miles too big and heavy for him to carry, or for the matter of that make any use at all of. ‘I might just as well,’ he lay and muttered, ‘think of getting old Grim’s walking-stick itself, and marching about with that in my paw.’ And, I think, if Jack hadn’t just then remembered his new title only lately given him of the GIANT-CRUSHER, he would have blubbered right out when such a nonsensical notion as that got into his head. As it was, he laughed himself to sleep so as just to prevent a tear squeezing out at the corner of his eye.

But, strange to say, when he woke in the morning the nonsensical ridiculous thought of marching about with half a big tree for his walking-stick, *would* come

back and stick in his head, though he laughed till his sides were all one horrid ache. His mother thought he had gone quite cracked, and went to consult a neighbour (who was a ‘wise woman’ and ‘culled simples’) what *she* thought. But as soon as ever she was fairly out of the road, away went Jack to the gill and got out the bladder and the eye with the same ridiculous thought in his head, and strange to say, it was not NONSENSE that flashed back into his mind, it was much more like ‘RIGHT YOU ARE.’

But there was a thing which astonished Jack much more even than that. And this was a matter he had noticed before, but never so much as that very morning, namely, an alteration in the eye itself. And it set him wondering, and it set him a-fancying. And well it might.

But I think, before telling you any more about this matter, I must just get you to call to mind the Giant’s Chamber or Dungeon (as it is called nowadays), and ask you to try and think of it as it must have been when that tremendous ruin of all the old rock-face had but newly fallen. Jack, as I told you, went there day after day, and spent hours and hours mooning and spying and peeping all about. When you go there for a walk or a picnic, or to look for jackdaws’ nests or starlings’ nests—and I am sure we found five-and-twenty the last time I went there with two or three boys with me—what

you see is, great tumbled masses of rock, no doubt ; but you don't see gaping cracks among them, and fresh, raw, yellow surfaces, and broken trees, and large sheets of turf torn up, and the crushed-up lumps of stone, and the coarse yellow sand and gravel, and hundreds of smaller cornery bits of stone left after that tremendous smash. Indeed, you see only a few bare rock - masses, for almost everything, rock and sand and gravel, is all covered over with big ferns and little ferns, some as tall as a man almost, and some only two or three inches high. And you see growth of bilberry wires, and coarse grass, and small shrubs and mountain-ash saplings, and holly-trees and birch-trees, little and big. And you say 'Oh ! what a beautiful place it is.' But you must try to see it as Jack saw it, in all its raggedness and ruggedness, and ruin and desolation, with gaping cracks, and splits, and chasms, and dark holes, and still-tottering blocks here and there, and nothing green growing to hide any of its horrid roughness and fearsome desolation. No doubt Jack had looked for his knife, but he had soon given that up, especially when he found that the foxes and the wolves, which had already found their way in, began to bring out bits of the Giant's clothing and other matters ; and one day he even found a finger-joint or two. But I don't suppose any of you can guess what it was that Jack was most on the look-out for.

Now, no one had ever heard that Greedy Grim

had a hen that laid golden eggs, or a golden harp either, or any one of those marvellous goods giants seem almost always to have been possessed of. Besides, if he had had anything of that sort, Jack would, with all his watchings and spyings, have been about sure to have found such a matter out. Besides which again, either a hen or a harp wouldn't have been very likely to escape in such a big crash as there had been. And yet, you see, the Giant might have had a treasure of some other kind. Many giants had, as is quite well known. At all events, there is no doubt that Jack fancied he had, or might have, some sort of a hoard somewhere. And he was about sure also that it was stored up in the very deepest part of the hole he had hid in when he was going to try and catch the eye before it got into the stick's head. For, to tell you the exact truth, he had got something into his pocket that day which puzzled him a lot, and which he thought must have rolled in of itself when he scurried off so sharp after grabbing the eye. This was a dusky-looking sort of stone, with a dozen or more facets on it, that he was sure was a precious stone; and he knew very well that giants in those days often had great bags of diamonds and pearls and other jewels of different sorts.

But there was another thing of quite a different sort, and which he knew for certain. When calves as well as children were very scarce, Grim used some

days to go to the river to get some fish—great trouts and salmon a yard long—to serve for his dinner. And he seemed, so Jack thought, to be rather fond of the big mussels which grew in the waters of the beck in those days. And one day when Jack was watching, Grim had brought with him several dozen of these great shell-fish, and the boy saw him open them one by one, and swallow the fish one after another, but never without looking them over first. Jack at first thought that some of them might not be fit for food. But he changed his opinion presently: for he saw Grim pull out of one of the shells a great shiny round thing as big almost as a turtle-dove's egg, which had such a glistering shine on it, that Jack had no doubt it was a pearl. Well, there was another one in the same lot of mussels, only not half as big as the first. And he saw, moreover, that the Giant cleaned both of them up, and took them into the cave, and came out again without them. So Jack knew there was a hoard there somewhere. And this was why he came there so often and searched, and peered, and looked all about as he did. But all the same he did not find it—at least, not just yet. But he found something else, that he had never given a thought to, but which, for all that, had put that perplexing set of thoughts—at least, the occasion of them—into his head. For one day, when he was prowling about—and he had seen that there had been a sort of slip or settling

down of the fallen mass since he was last there—he had seen also a great block of wood sticking out a little from the confused and broken mass. He noticed, too, that this seemed to stand out more after two or three days were passed, and when he came to look more closely at it, he got to be quite sure it was really the head of the Giant's walking-stick. And his first thought with himself had been—‘Well, I know the head of that hideous club was just against the place where I think the hoard must have been kept.’ And after that you may judge whether he did not look and search pretty close to see if either pearls or jewels could be found near where what he called ‘the figure-head’ lay.

But no, there was no such luck. And yet still there was one thing he noticed ; that, indeed, he could not help taking notice of. I mean that the head seemed to stand out a little more every day he went to look at it. And as he noticed it more and more, it seemed to be crumbling away ; and, if he touched it, as he often did in pottering about after his looked-for jewels, why, all the outside peeled off just as if he was rubbing off the hoar-frost from a stick or a stone. One day, when he was just idly grubbing at it with his fingers, he thought it moved a little. When he came to try if that was really so, he found that it was, and that he could stir it all quite easily. In a week or two it had peeled and shrunk so that he could almost lift it out of its place

among the fallen rocks. And then it came into his head all at once, ‘Suppose I could bring the eye here and put it again into its own particular socket! My! whatever would happen then?’

My word! but Jack was all alive now! He was in such haste to get home and have a ‘think-talk’ with the eye, and, if he was right, get everything ready for an early start to the ruined Giant’s Chamber the very next day, that he tripped himself up two or three times before he got out of the wood below.

Well, he hardly slept a wink all night; and quite before it was light enough to see plainly in that dusky shaded part of the gill where his hiding-place was, he was there, having quite scared his mother by the way he took his breakfast of milk and bread—a full half of it outside, that is—and rushed off, spluttering out as well as he could, ‘I ain’t going to be Little Jack any longer, mother. I’m boun’ to be Great Jack now!’ ‘Massy me!’ cried the old lady, ‘I aims thou’s boun’ to be half-baked.’ When at last it grew light enough for Jack really to see what he was about, he got his eye carefully out and viewed it all round; and he liked the look of it better than ever he had done before. It not only was not nearly so large as it had been at first, but it wasn’t so flabby and so like an unhealthy jelly-fish that had been kept too much indoors. It was quite bright and brisk-looking now; and, instead

of being large enough to flop over the edges of an ordinary-sized pudding-dish, it was hardly as big as a good-sized duck-egg.

Jack's new thought was hardly formed in his mind when the eye brightened so sparklingly that Jack almost fancied it lightened, and he knew in a moment that it was 'all right.' And then he thought two more thoughts, the first what he would do next with the eye ; and the other, what the stick would do when he had done the first : and to both of them he got the answer, 'All right' without having to wait a single second for it. And after that he cut off to the Dungeon or Cave as hard as he could go without danger of throwing himself down and perhaps damaging his treasured eye. Well, he got there in a very short time, himself and his charge alike safe and unhurt. First of all he stowed the bladder away in a nice, mossy, well-shaded nook among the still-standing rocks. Then he went straight to the walking-stick, and found that he could really move it, and even partly draw it out of the hole it was in. Next he cleaned it all, as far as he was able to get at it ; and he found it was growing lighter and more manageable every minute. My word ! how he laboured and strove and panted over his cleaning and polishing work ! And at last, if you will believe me, he was able to get it completely free, and to strip and polish it all along its whole length. And then he laid himself down by

the side of it—but not to rest ; no, he was not tired enough for that as yet ; but what for, do you think ? Why, just to measure it. And he found it was just four times and a head as tall as he was himself. ‘ Oh ! that’s nothing,’ he said to himself ; ‘ I’ve often seen a tourist in the season with a stick that had a crook at the end of it, twice as long as the bearer and looking much more sensible. Only, I hope people won’t take me for a “ tourist.” ’

The next thing was to get the Staff—for so Jack determined to call it—reared up and leaning against a place in the face of the cliff that had a sort of steps up it ; but, you may be sure he did it, if ever he had done anything in his life so, ‘ with the sweat of his brow.’ The next thing after that was to climb up the said steps, with the precious parcel in his hand, on purpose to try and fit the eye into the socket in the head of the Staff. I forget if I told you how carefully he had cleaned it out, and indeed made the whole head of the Staff shine as if it had been newly French-polished. I think, however, he had taken almost more care about the inside of the socket than the outside.

I don’t say Jack’s heart did not thump a little quicker when it came to actually fitting the eye in, or that he did not for a moment or two think about the possibility of a ‘ misfit.’ But he felt pretty sure that he hadn’t deceived himself, and that it really was quite ‘ all right.’

Now I am not going to tell you all about it, partly because if I did you'd know as much as I do, and of course I can't have that ; and partly because there is no occasion. All I shall tell you—at least just now—is that the socket fitted the eye 'like a glove' ; and that, when Jack put the latter near the former, it just jumped in with a lively little smack. And I shan't tell you any more of what followed, at least at present, except that Jack jumped with joy, and the Staff jumped, and the very eye in its head jumped. And I really think that if Jack's mother could have seen him then, and all his cracky proceedings, she would have run off as hard as ever she could after the mad doctor. And then poor Little Jack might have been comfortably suffocated between two featherbeds, according to the canny wiselike 'treatment' of mad patients in those days.

But Jack's mother did not see him, nor yet hear him when he hoorayed and sang out, 'Oh no ! not Little Jack any longer ! But Jack the Great ! Jack the Rich ! Jack the Doer of Great Deeds !'

Well, after a bit, the two (Jack and the Staff, I mean) set off home together. Sometimes the Staff carried Jack, and sometimes Jack carried the Staff ; for there was no trouble about weight when once it became a seeing Staff again.

But I daresay you would like to know how it was the Staff managed to carry Jack. But I am not

going to tell you just yet, except that it wasn't quite what little boys call 'riding,' when they tie a bit of string to the neck of a walking-stick and waddle along with it between their legs, and call it a horse. And the reason I won't tell you at present is, that I have got other things I want to tell you first.

So Jack and the Staff got safely home, the folks that saw him from a distance thinking he must have got a big spear from the Castle, and wondering what he was going to do with it. They did not wonder that he was able to carry it, you know, because after it was published abroad that he had managed the crushing of the Giant, the folks began to think there was nothing, or next to nothing, he couldn't do if he set his mind to it.

All the same, Jack was just a little puzzled about what he was going to do with the Staff, and where he was going to keep it, so that neither it nor the eye should come to grief in any possible way. And it was not all at once he saw his way. His mother's poor old cot was neither high enough nor long enough to stow it away in at all. And besides, she had such a lot of gossips coming in all hours of the day, it would not have been the least safe there.

Before very long, however, he bethought himself of a tall, deep, narrow rift in the rocks not quite so far up the gill as where he used to keep the eye, which, as it seemed to him, would just do nicely if it were not for the little trickle of water which ran

down slowly through it ; and he fancied that, with a little bit of management, he could soon fettle that all right. And because the rift was so narrow that even he could only get into it sideways, he thought the Staff would be quite safe there, and the eye always kept just nicely moist. And so I shall have to leave Jack and his Staff for a little bit while I go on to tell you of other things, which perhaps were almost too pressing to have been left out in the cold so long.



## HOW LITTLE JACK CAME TO BE CALLED THE WOLF-QUELLER

WELL, I suppose you want to know something more about Little Jack, or, as we ought to call him now, Jack the Giant-crusher. And, indeed, there are several other things to tell, and some of them perhaps you might think worth listening to. I might tell you how he vanquished the awful Worm of the Whorle Hill, or how he slew the Griffon Erne of the Ernecliff (or Arncliff, as it is called nowadays), or how he got his name of the Wolf-queller from his clearing Westerdale and all the country-side from the terrible hordes of wolves that used to infest it. Then there was the Headless Hart of the Hart Leap, and you know where the Hart Leap is, and where the stones are that mark the length of the leap the Hart took, up there on the high moor above Beanley Bank, where I told you the other Jack sowed the marvel-

Ious Bean. And the Church-grim Goat of Goathland, there's such a weird story about that, and our Jack's part in stopping the terror and the harm that were occasioned by it. But I think I will tell you first about the Wolves of Westerdale, and how Jack the Giant-crusher managed to make a right clean sweep of them.

Now, if you want to understand my story quite well and clearly, you'll have to fancy yourselves going up that hilly moor-road that leads up Castleton Ridge, and goes on and on till you reach Kirkby Moorside. When you get a pretty good distance up it, or say about a mile and more from Castleton, you will reach a place from which, looking forward and a bit to your right, you can see very nearly to where the Esk rises. About as much to your left you can see some shooting butts on the ridge that have a particular name. Turning round about a quarter of a circle, and looking more Whitby way, you see endless moors with some cultivated land beyond. The valley between you and it used to be called Ulvedale, and so was the valley a little below the source of the Esk. Now Ulvedale in English is Wolfdale, though both those valleys nowadays are called Woodale. And the line of butts on the rigg are called Wolfpit Slack butts, because there was a pit-trap for catching wolves there once. Now, when you have got two dales called after the wolves, and a place named because of a wolf-trap, all in sight at

once, don't you think wolves must at some time or other have been likely to make themselves rather more free there than welcome?

Any way, there is no doubt about it; and hundreds of years ago the wolves in Westerdale were very numerous and very fierce and dangerous. And you can think for yourselves how, in the dreary winter time when the snow lay all about, in many places even yards deep, and quite commonly two or three feet thick, when food was bad to get, they must have been very savage and bold in their terrible hunger. And these deep valleys, full of trees and jungle and swamps, as they were then, would just be the almost inaccessible lurking-places to suit them.

But there is a story told about that great old burial mound called Wolfpit Hause—after which those butts are named, you know—which is rather a startling one. It is about a fight a man once had in it hundreds of years ago with an old she-wolf who had come upon him when he was taking two of her cubs away alive. After an awful scrimmage with her, in which he got very badly torn, he succeeded at last, when he was almost fainting with loss of blood, in striking a fatal blow with the knife he had been fighting her with. But I don't mention this Wolfpit Hause and the fight with the wolf in it—for it is all scooped out in the middle as you can see any day—only to show how the wolves lived, and

prowled, and ravaged, all about in these parts in those old days ; I had another reason besides that.

Of course you have all heard about Little Red-Riding-Hood, and how she was gobbled down by a horrid old brute of a wolf. But I don't think you have ever been told where all that took place, where the little girl's mother lived, or where her grandmother lived, or anything exact and particular about it all. I know I never heard it myself when I was young. But when I got to know about all these other things I have already told you, and have to tell you yet, I got to know about this also ; and this Wolfpit Hause and the story connected with it, have not been mentioned for nothing, you may be sure.

And now, I'll tell you. I said the Wolf-trap was on a high ridge of the moor. If you looked for it from the place I mentioned, you would look right across Danby Dale Head to see it ; but, just about as far on the other side, lies Fryup Dale Head, and if you want to go down into Fryup Head from Wolfpit, you have to be careful how you go, because the path is so steep and rugged and broken, with great rocks as big as cottages lying about every here and there. Except where the tall crags, from which these rocks tumbled some time or other long ago, or the fallen rocks themselves make it impossible, there are trees growing ; fir-trees most of them, but also birches and hollies and rowan-trees, and a few oaks. Two fields below the bottom

skirt of the wood stands a farmhouse. It is a good deal more than a hundred years old, and it stands where a house had stood before it for hundreds of years already. And it has got a name that I know it has had more than three hundred years, and how much before that I cannot tell. That name is Woodend House; and that is where Little Red-Riding-Hood's grandmother lived.

At the other end of the wood, sometimes called Woodhead, but oftener Hawkscar in these days—though that is a mistake, I think—stood the cot where the man that killed the wolf lived. To be sure, some people tell me that because he is called ‘the woodman’ he ought to have lived at the house still called Forester’s Lodge, lower down the dale. But I have always felt sure that, if he lived anywhere in that part of the country, it must have been somewhere near, and not nearly two miles off, at the place now called Forester’s Lodge.

According to my authority, however, he lived at Hawkscar, and the place was so called because his name was Hawk, or Hauk, as it used to be spelt in those old days.

Well, everybody knows that when the woodman came in and found the wolf asleep in the poor old lady’s bed—and he might well be sleepy, after such a supper as he had had: one tough old woman, and a tender little girl for ‘sweets’—he split the cruel old beast’s head open with his woodman’s axe—and

served him quite right and all. But very few besides myself, and the party from whom I got the true story, know that when they skinned and cut the old brute open directly afterwards, they found Little Red-Riding-Hood still alive. He had swallowed her whole in his greediness, and she was still kicking as well as alive—though only very faintly at first. But she soon came round, and a good cup of warm tea, with plenty of sugar and cream in it, speedily revived her.

Perhaps you won't believe this part of my story. But you must remember that this was a wolf out of the common, to begin his supper with an old woman whole, and then to finish up with a small girl besides. And for my own part, I think it is very likely that he had made his jaws ache sadly over the tough old lady, and that he would be all the more likely to bolt the girl at one mouthful. And besides, I am sure you remember that story which the Brothers Grimm tell, about the wolf which had gobbled down a whole family of kids, and how the kids were got back from him again, quite safe and sound, and great stones put in in their place; and that the wolf never found it out until he went to the river to drink, when the stones overbalanced him, and made him tumble in and get drowned. And so you see, it is not at all a story that cannot be believed, that Little Red-Riding-Hood escaped the way I tell you. But anyhow, I am sure you will

have noticed that this old brute was not at all a common sort of a wolf. And that is just what I have got to explain to you fully.

You have all heard about the birds all meeting to choose a King of the birds ; and also you have heard plenty, in one place or another, about a King of the beasts ; and so on. From that you will easily understand how there happened to be a King of the wolves in our part of the world in those old days we have been talking about, when the wolves and other creatures talked just as well as men. This murderous wolf, however, that gobbled down Little Red-Riding-Hood and devoured her grandmother, wasn't the king of the wolves, but only the eldest son of the king. As to the king himself, or Wolfwald as he was rightly called, he was a wolf of wolves ; a grandfather among wolves. They said he could eat a whole ox—they weren't such big ones as ours are, to be sure—right off for his supper. And if I were to try and draw a picture of him for you, I should only frighten you out of your wits.

Well, this monstrous old Wolfwald was staying down at that lower Wolfdale when this business of Little Red-Riding-Hood happened, and you may guess if he wasn't pretty savage when he heard that that unlucky woodman had split his son's head with his axe ! And if you had seen him come raging and rushing and yowling through the deep bogs on the moor, where the Lealholm folks now grave their turf

and peat, down through Crunkley Gill, up through the great forest which has now shrunk to poor little Crag Wood, all along Fryup Side and to Woodhead, I think you would never have lived to this day after such a scare as that.

Well, poor Hauk was at his dinner, such as it was, when Wolfwald got there ; and you may fancy if his highness the ‘Walda’ felt very much more amiable when the first thing he saw about the hut was his son’s great shaggy skin hung up to dry in the sun ! He went for Hauk with a rush ; but the door of the cot was too strait for him to get in at ; and there he was, like a cat with a mouse in a strong mouse-trap. He tore round and round, howling in the savagest way, and scrabbling with his huge paws. But it was no use ; the cot was built on the rock. But he wasn’t going to be done so ; for in a moment he reared himself up, and began to rive the sods and rafters off the roof (which came quite down on to the ground, you know, as huts were built then) ; and in another minute there was nothing left, not even the bones, of poor hapless Hauk.

I don’t think you ever heard of that sequel to the Little Red-Riding-Hood story before, did you ?

But it wasn’t the end of the whole business, I can tell you. His wolf-highness was that enraged at what had befallen his son, and his mouth watered so at the sight of all the cattle and sheep and horses he saw all about—for they had plenty of good stock

in those days as well as now in that part of the Dale—that he paid Woodend, and the other farms near, a good many visits. And he did not always come alone, because he was breeding up another son to be in the place of the one he had lost ; and, what was worse still, he had become a regular ‘man-eater’ himself. He had not eaten Hauk for nothing. He liked the taste, as well as the revenge. So he was always on the look-out for a man or a woman to top up with after eating a cow, or two or three sheep, and a pig or two. This was serious, and the Dales-people thought so too. But how was it to be remedied ? What was there that could be done ? This was even worse than Giant Grim. To be sure *he* ate their children (who weren’t of much account on the farm), and now and then when that supply failed, a white calf or two. But as for this monster of a wolf, he seemed to have no inclination for boys or girls either. He let them go by to school, or home again, without so much as smelling after them. But ten cows, five three-year-olds, six heifers, and a bull (that every one was afraid of), to say nothing of a couple of score of sheep, three brood sows, and about a dozen good store-pigs—that was serious indeed. And no wonder the farmers all looked very grave over it, and scratched their heads, and held parish meetings about it.

I should not like to have to tell you of all the wise things that were said at these parish meetings,

though every one knows that that is the right sort of place to go to if you want to get enlightened on any subject under the sun. All the same, however, there was a word of wisdom said one day, at a meeting which had already been adjourned three times because of the weight of wisdom which was lavished by the different speakers ; and this wise word came from the old grave-digger. And I suppose it must have been because his words were so weighty that it always took him a quarter of an hour to get them out. So you may be sure they were always listened to when they did come. Certainly, some folks said that he was a born fool, and that he said so few words because he hacked and stammered so awfully. But that, belike, was only jealousy. There was nothing like jealousy at this meeting though, when once poor Willy had got himself delivered of his three words of weight and wisdom, for they were, ‘S-s-s-s-s-end f-f-f-f-f-for J-J-J-J-J-J-Jack !’

‘Send for Jack !’ Of course it was the very thing. Jack who had done for the Giant, one good bat with whose walking-stick would have hit the wolf, big as he was, into a bag-pudding ; why, of course, Jack could match ten such wolves as yon ! So the grave-digger, who was generally called Willy Berier, was sent off quick-foot to see if he could find Jack, and fetch him to the parish meeting. And the reason Willy Berier was sent was that he was

'very kind with' Jack's old mother, who was never tired of talking to him about her brave little son. Not but what she was a good deal put about, part puzzled and part vexed, by his queer ways. For she said a hundred times over, 'He isn't like the same lad since he mauled that precious old brute of a Giant.'

Poor stammering Willy, however, was not to get to his journey's end without an adventure—one, too, that scared him worse than ever he had been scared before. There's one thing we may take for granted, I fancy, viz. that old Wolfwald would not be the one not to hear all about this holding of parish meetings and the reason of it. Whether he had himself been hanging about the place of meeting, and had heard odds and ends of what was going on, or whether he had some secret information, I cannot tell you. All I know is that, when Willy had just got to the most lonely part of his walk across to Jack's mother's, all at once he was startled by a very gruff voice close to his ear, saying, 'Now, Willy, where are you off to in such a hurry?' Willy jumped nearly out of his skin, when he heard that so suddenly. But when he looked round and saw who it was that asked him, he would have been very glad to jump in again, or into the least midge's skin that ever flew and bit. For there was the hugest, grizzliest, fiercest-looking wolf he had ever dreamed of, within a yard of him!

Poor Willy, as we know, was never a good hand at talking ; but to have to talk under such circumstances was the most trying experience he had ever had, and he could neither find wind nor words. Meanwhile, there stood old Grizzly, quite enjoying Willy's terror ; though he did not look hungry, altogether. He was standing up on his hind legs, like a swell loitering leisurely about, with his tail brought up under his left arm, as if it was a lady's train which she wanted to keep out of the dirt—for it was a real handsome bushy tail, with no end of a 'flag' to it. And he had a bone in his mouth in place of a twig, a very crooked shin-bone it was, which made Willy think it might have been Bandy-legged Bat the Barker's, who had been killed and eaten by the wolf not long before. And besides, the wolf had a very nasty snarling sort of a grin on his face, which made Willy ready to 'look out for' snaps, if not for 'squalls.'

'Where are you off to? I ask,' growled the wolf, growlier than ever. But poor Willy, who wanted to say 'Please sir, I don't know,' could get no further than 'P-p-p-p-pl-pl'——'Take your time, Willy,' said the old brute, with a nastier grin than ever ; 'I'm in no hurry. Lots of time, Willy, now you've come so quick so far. Take a seat, Willy, and lend me that long finger of yours that you grub the pieces of money out of the graves with, and I'll pick my teeth with it instead of this bone.' And

before Willy knew, almost, his right forefinger was all but between the wolf's teeth! ‘I'll tell you, I will indeed,’ rapped out Willy quicker than ever in his life before; for he had seen the wolf bite the bone he had in his mouth in two pieces and spit them out just as he caught hold of his finger. ‘The truth, mind,’ said the wolf; ‘it won't do to tell me you “don't know.”’

Willy was in an awful fright before, but when he found that the wolf actually knew of the taradiddle he wanted to tell him, he got more nervous than ever; and having found his tongue, he was obliged to find the truth too. So he told the wolf all about the message, and why it was sent, and everything there was to tell.

Well, old Wolfwald considered for a moment, and then put Willy's finger quite into his mouth, and bit off the first joint. ‘Now, Willy,’ said he, ‘if you don't do exactly as I tell you, I'll eat you up that way, single joints at a time. You'll find it rather lively, perhaps.’ Willy thought so too, and made up his mind accordingly.

Then said the wolf to him, ‘I'll take your message to Little Jack, and you go and tell those wiseacres that he is coming. Off with you, sharp!’ But what the crafty old brute meant, was to go and find Jack, and give him a little nip with those cruel jaws of his, and so take him, or what was left of him, to the parish meeting himself.

But our Little Jack wasn't going to be caught napping, or indeed caught at all, quite so easy as that amounted to. He had had his eye on Wolfwald for some time, and especially lately, because he was quite sure he was up to no good. For you should remember that Jack had better opportunities, now he had got the Staff with the Eye in its head, of getting to know what was up than ever before, though he hadn't managed so very badly in the old times. And thus it came about that poor Willy got another fright before he had gone a quarter of a mile on his backward journey. But this time it was a rather high-pitched boy's voice which called out to him from the top of a tall tree he had to pass under, 'Hullo, Willy! where are your short shanks taking you to so fast?' Willy screwed his head round, and peered up among the branches, and there he saw Little Jack sitting, as he said afterwards, just like a raven in a forked branch, and he began to stutter. 'Out with it, Willy,' cried Jack, as sharp as a new needle; 'out with it. You could talk fast enough to old Grizzly just now. Talk to me too, or you'll lose more than the top joint of your pet finger.' So Willy found his tongue, and began to tell all the truth. 'All right,' said Jack, before he had got half through his story; 'all right, you go and tell them I am coming, just as old Grizzly told you. But don't say a word about him. Leave him to me. I've only got to see after my

mother, and keep her safe from that old rascal, and I shall be at the meeting almost as soon as you.'

Willy did not know how that was to come to pass, and I daresay you don't either. But that is one of the things I am not going to tell you just yet. It is enough for me to say at present that Jack went and made his mother safe, and besides that gave old Wolfwald a flea in his ear while he was poking about close to the old woman's cot. Indeed, it was a flea in both ears, for all in a moment—the wolf did not the least know how it had come so—there was a nasty stinging feel in them, and a hole in each as if a sharp arrow had been shot through them. To be sure, he had not heard the twang of the bow, but then, he knew the feel, and he had never liked it. If men got up in trees, or on to rocks that he couldn't scale, and shot at him, he thought it wasn't fair, and he gave bows and arrows a very wide berth when he could not get at the archers. And so he began to sneak away. But just as he turned, a sharp-pitched voice sang out to him—'Next time you come, old fellow, I'll give you a couple of rings to wear in those holes in your ears,' and there was a shrill peal of laughter such as to make Mr. Wolfwald shivery as well as rageous. But he did not want any more arrows that came without bow-strings to drive them; and so, tucking his tail between his legs, quite forgetting his jaunty carriage

when he was scaring poor helpless Willy out of his wits, he just cut and ran.

Jack, however, was as good as his word. He was at the parish meeting long before Willy had got through his story, and he had his Staff with him, and wore a neat-fitting jerkin of gray, with a little cloak of black velvet hanging over one shoulder, and a very pretty cap on, with a plume of Egret's feathers in it, and a pearl as big as a cob-nut in front. And when the farmers saw him, they all came out of the house where the meeting was held, and stood round him in a ring, while he climbed up on to the big base of the cross which stood handy on the village green.

Of course he asked them quite politely (though he knew all the time pretty nearly) what they had sent for him for. And then they told him their pitiful story. Well, he looked very grave over it, as well he might in their opinion ; and when he did speak it was to ask them : 'Was that old grizzly Wolfwald the only wolf that did them any harm ?' Then it came out that the last great storm of snow they had seen a flock of twenty-seven wolves all at once, and the shepherds had only been able to trap half a dozen all the winter through, and the spring as well. Then a man from Westerdale told how, only two mornings before, a she-wolf with four whelps had got into the common-fold there and had worried about twenty sheep. And then followed

story after story of the same kind, only worse if anything. But they were all bad enough.

Jack listened to everything they told him, just like a wise-looking counsellor of rather small dimensions ; and at last, when they had told him all there was to tell, he spoke in reply, and his words were : 'I think we had better make a clean sweep of them.'

You should have heard the applause that followed that pithy speech. It was quite clear every man-jack among them all was of exactly the same opinion.

'But how will you manage it?' was Jack's next short speech.

At this a great many mouths were opened, but, alas ! they only remained open, for no one was prepared with an answer.

Jack smiled ; the farmers sniggered. At last Jack spoke again, asking, 'Who will give a pig to catch a wolf?'

After a pause of at least ten minutes, one of them spoke up and said : 'I will, Master Jack—leastwise, beg pardon, Mister Giant-crusher (for he was abashed at his familiarity),—but how will you do it?' 'Oh,' says Jack, 'don't you know that if you have a pig in a poke with you on horseback, and bite its tail hard enough as you ride along to make it squeak lustily, you'll have more wolves after you in a quarter of an hour than you care for?' 'Well, that's true anyhow,' said another voice. 'Well,' cried Jack, 'you give me a dozen, or better still, a

score of pigs, and I'll make them make such a squealing that all the wolves within five miles shall hear. And old Grizzly himself, if we can only let him know that his friend, Little Jack, will be among the pigs, will be pretty safe to turn up with the rest to such a feast as that.'

'But,' objected some one, 'they'll eat up all the little pigs, and maybe some of the chaps as bites their tails as well. And what shall we be the better for that?'

Jack wanted to say, 'Oh, you blessed donkeys,' only he didn't. But what he did say was, 'You leave that to me. All I want you to do is to bring me the pigs and some strong 'band,' and pokes big enough to hold two or three pigs each to 'hug' them all in; and then, when I have done my part, to follow on and massacre all the wolves I don't kill outright.'

Everybody seemed to think that was all fair enough, and that if the worst came to the worst, they only stood to lose a dozen or two of squeakers, which, after all, the wolves would be about sure to pick up singly when the acorn time came, and the swine were let out to pasture in the woods. So sixteen pigs were soon promised, and the great day was fixed for the third day from the day of the meeting.

But Jack's plans were not all complete, or nearly so, even yet. What he wanted most of all was to

be sure and catch Wolfwald himself. And Jack thought he was just as likely to catch that crafty old dodger without some new special dodge of his own, as Wolfwald was to catch him, Jack, asleep. So he had to think and plan a bit.

Now Jack was very good friends with the harmless beasts and birds all round, and he understood the language of more than one kind, or two either, of both birds and beasts. And he had one particular friend at this time, among the birds, to whom he had rendered a kind service when he was laying his plans to crush the Giant. This was a large, aged, rather hoary and very important raven. This bird had partly built his new yearly nest on the top of half a dozen others in a part of the crag which, Jack felt almost sure, would be shaken, perhaps would fall down too when he cut the root which was to let the whole rock-face go crashing down together. And the raven had shifted his quarters accordingly ; and when he saw that the ruin of his last six or seven nests, built raven-wise one a-top of the other, had all tumbled in one heap, he felt very grateful to Little Jack for the hint he had given.

But besides this, the venerable old fellow, one of the most honourable and respected ravens in all the district, had a grudge, and not such a very little one either, against the whole nation of the wolves, with old Grizzly at their head. It happened this way. Two huge stags were fighting one day about eight

or nine months before, near the top of the steepest crags in Crumbeclive. They were very resolute and very savage with one another, and they got mixed, horns and legs, and legs and horns, in the strangest way you can conceive; and then they tumbled over one another, and got worse mixed than ever. Tumbling and rolling about like this, they got one tumble too many, and rolled right down the cliff to the very edge of the river: and that was the last of all their tumbles, for they both of them got all the bones in their bodies broken.

It was a very steep place, as I said, where they fell; and besides the overhanging rocks, there were a lot of trees growing outward rather at the foot of the cliff, while as to bush and scrogs, there was any amount. Thus it happened that, for nearly a week, no one found the carcases. But one day old Mr. Raven, generally called Greyhead, was flying meditatively along not very far from where the two harts lay, and he gave a loud hoarse CRAWNK, CRAWNK, up in the air, and then wheeled round two or three times, and finally settled down on the dead top of the tallest old tree growing near by where the deer had fallen. It so happened there were three or four members of his tribe, if not of his family—and I can't be sure about that—flying about within sight or hearing. And in less time than it takes me to tell it, there were five ravens seated on that tree. Presently one flew down and then another. These

were the youngest and the most curious and the least cautious of the party. But in a minute one of them called out CRAWNK, and then the other croaked out CRAWNK, and in five seconds all the lot had fallen to on the jolliest meal they had had provided for them for a month of Sundays.

But it chanced that old Wolfwald and his two sons were taking a walk that day, and Grizzly heard the first CRAWNK, and understood it quite as well as the ravens themselves did ; and before the black company had half satisfied their hunger, he 'made the feathers fly' far worse than the blundering young shooter does, for he charged right into the middle of them with a savage snarl and a snap on both sides of him. And indeed, it was said that old Greyhead being slow by reason of his age, the wolf actually tore one of his best tail feathers out by the roots. Anyhow, when the ravens, after being thus rudely disturbed at their own proper feast, had settled down upon the nearest trees and began to remonstrate, as they did, and surely had a right to do, old Grizzly made matters worse by being horribly abusive. He called the respectable old Greyhead a 'thieving purloining old rascal.' 'What business had he to come there, right into his very larder, where he had been keeping his venison for a week till it was fit for a gentleman's table, and to set his foul crew pulling it to pieces with their dirty claws and nasty beaks ? You are a thundering old repro-

bate,' he finished, 'and if I ever catch you in my preserves, I'll nip your old head off.'

Well, no raven with any self-respect could put up with insulting language of this kind, and especially when he had been wronged before being insulted. So, as you may imagine, the venerable Mr. Raven wasn't too particular a well-wisher to the redoubtable Wolfwald. But Jack knew all about this very well ; and he thought he could work it so that it would help him to circumvent the old wolf finely. So he told the raven as much of his plans as would convince him that no good was meant to that blackguard of a wolf that had insulted him ; and in the uttering of a croak he agreed to do whatever Jack wanted of him.

What Jack wanted him to do was to go and get speech with old Grizzly, and tell him he was very sorry at that little misunderstanding they had had a bit ago ; and that he felt that he had been in the wrong in not coming to tell Wolfwald about the dead stags, instead of beginning his own dinner upon them, and suffering his companions to be as greedy as himself. And to prove how sincere he was, he had flown all the way over to let his wolf-highness know there was a savoury wild boar, very well kept, indeed quite gamy, lying at this present moment not so very far from the Westerdale Wolf-dale ; but that all the wolves there were frightened out of their wits almost, because the shepherds and

farmers all about were training their shepherd dogs to worry old stuffed wolf-skins. And in order to confirm his words, the Raven was to take one of the boar's eyes and a bit out of the juiciest part of the tongue, just for Grizzly to taste.

That old beast's ears were still precious sore, as was likely; and he was in point of fact rather hungry, not having cared to go much among the bushes and trees these last two days; and he thought the boar-meat first-rate; and besides that, he wanted to be even with those miserable farmers and shepherds, sending for Jack first, and then training their wretched curs to bite and mangle even dead wolves' skins. And over and above all else, he did want to be upsides with that insulting little jackanapes, who had made holes through his ears first, and then laughed at him by promising to put rings in them if he caught him there again. 'I'll teach him,' he growled; and the Raven felt pretty sure his part in the plot would work. But to make quite sure, he said, as insinuatingly as he could —and a raven, with his head on one side, and his eye cunningly cocked, can be very insinuating, you know—' My particular little friend, Jack, who let the crag down, with half a dozen of my old nests upon it, and part of my this year's nest as well—though I never said anything to him about it; I scorned the dirty trick too much—he will be there, I'm told: and when you get there, too, with all the army of

wolves you can raise, and the miserable curs run away at the very sight of you, and the shepherds and farmers after them as hard as they can pelt, and little Jack, who can't run fast with his little short legs, gets left behind, and you catch him—you won't hurt him, now, will you ?'

All I can say is that, when the wolf heard that, he didn't look quite as amiable as he would have tried to do, if he had been sitting for his photograph, and the artist had just told him to 'look as pleasant as he could.'

So the Raven flew back to Jack, for he knew very well where to find him, only stopping by the way to get a nice mouthful or two from the tenderest part of the boar, and told his ally all that had taken place. Jack felt quite sure all would go straight now ; and only telling the friendly Raven to keep a sharp look-out for Wolfwald, and to keep him, Jack, well posted up with all his sayings and doings—which was child's play to such an experienced and wide-awake old bird as he was—he just set to to put the finishing touch to his own plans. He got his fifteen pigs—for one of the sixteen brought to him had no tail, and therefore would not do for his purpose—all nicely tethered, each at the foot of a tree with spreading boughs, and with a jolly good feed of potatoes and barley-meal, and other little matters that pigs, properly brought up, are known to like, just to keep them quiet till the moment

came when he wanted them all to squeal together (as loud as pigs, both terrified and hurt, possibly could). And this was the way he was going to manage it, as soon as the Raven came and told him it was time to act. He had tied a strong bit of the cord he had told the farmers to provide to each little pig's tail, long enough to go over the lowest horizontal bough of the tree above, and hang down a yard or two on the other side. To the other end of each several string he tied a stone weighing two or three pounds. These stones he balanced nicely, so that if they were pulled by a bit of finer string cunningly attached to them, they would fall down over the bough and give each little piggy's tail a very rude and most vexatious pull ; and, more than that, keep it up. These finer strings Jack meant to handle himself.

Well, pigs and strings and stones were hardly all arranged before the old Raven came to say that Wolfwald had heard that the shepherds and their curs had arranged to meet that day, and was coming at the head of a whole army of wolves ; Greyhead thought there must be every wolf in Westerdale, little and big, old and young, thirty or forty of them at least ; and had not Jack better look out for his own safety ? But Jack only rubbed his hands, and looked as if he thought somebody else would have to look out for himself before the day was out, and for those that belonged to him as well.

In a few minutes more there was such a howling as only hungry savage wolves know how to howl, and ten of the curs the men had with them put their tails between their legs and ran off helter-skelter, yowling as only frightened dogs can yowl.

In a minute or two more Jack saw old Grizzly come and take a look over the bank, but a good half-mile off. He waited patiently, because he knew the wolves would hear the yelping curs, and would want to be after them if it all seemed safe. Then Jack slyly set two stones falling, and MY! didn't the two little pigs concerned play their part pigfully! This decided the wolves, especially the youngest of them, and down came half a dozen, with their long slinging trot. Jack could see old Grizzly trying to check the others; so he let loose four more stones. But the noise the pigs made was almost more than he could endure himself, and, much more than the wolves could stand against; and so—especially when he saw Wolfwald himself rather hurried, perhaps hurrying down the hill—he loosed the rest of the stones, and all the fifteen piggies were squealing at once, as if their lives depended on the noise they made—as perhaps they did.

Well Jack, who had never parted with his Staff, waited till the first wolves were busy with the first pair of unlucky little pigs, and then in a moment he jumped as high as he could up the shank of the Staff, laying hold of it both with hands and arms

and legs as if he were going to swarm up it. And then, in another second, if you had been there to see, you would have understood what I meant when I said that the Staff carried Jack as well as that Jack carried the Staff that day when he had just fitted the eye in. For in a second, as I said, Jack was riding a pick-a-back, with his arms securely round the neck of the Staff and the Staff itself leaping—or rather loping—about with a startling activity. And another thing there was to notice besides that, which was, that however lightly the hops or lopes were taken (and they certainly were wonderfully light), little round holes were left in the ground. Indeed you could not have helped noticing that the Staff was tipped with a shining sharp steel point, some inches long. Mounted thus on his strange, but more strangely active, steed, Jack made but three bounds and he was down upon one of the wolves which had just laid hold of poor piggy on the right—there were four wolves in that lot—and speared him through in a second with the impulse of the leap. Another bound, and another wolf lay disabled, and, as he fell, the other two blundered over him, and were both spitted with one dig of the steel point.

Next Jack bounded across the open glade to where the second pig was tethered, which by this time had squeaked its last squeak in the very jaws of the two wolves which had seized it. Jack made

equally short work of them. But he knew well enough that the real fight was to come yet. From the height of his Staff he could see old Grizzly coming warily on, and with him his two sons, one about half-grown and the other a fine big wolf almost grown up. Jack very quietly, though quickly, withdrew behind a large beech, from the concealment afforded by which he could alike watch the proceedings of the monster wolf and his own proper opportunity for action. He saw Wolfwald come up to the group of four wolves, two dead and two disabled, lying near the first pig, and smell the reeking remnants of poor piggy, and that he did not seem quite easy in his mind. But just then the eldest son caught sight of the third pig, a most tempting-looking little porker, quite white and plump, struggling and squealing no great way in front of him. Young wolfdom couldn't stand the sight, and he made a resolute bolt for the squealer. And seeing that, old Grizzly himself advanced too, no doubt in order to second and support his wolfling if need were. But the moment Jack saw him fairly in the open, with a spring and a bound he drove his sharp point through one of the old chap's ears, and with another quick hop he did the same for the other ear. The old wolf snarled, not so very good-naturedly, and made a quick snap at the lower part of the Staff. But Jack had taken the precaution to have it strengthened and armoured with two plates

of steel, each covering half the round of the stick, and reaching more than a yard up it. So that all that Grizzly took by his motion was the breaking out of two of his sharpest teeth.

Now Jack began to jeer him, and asked him if he thought the holes were big enough now for a pair of real handsome ear-rings. Old Grizzly got so savage that he forgot all prudence, and reared himself up as if he meant to try and get at Jack that way. But before he could get within six inches of the Staff with his vicious old paws, Jack was a dozen yards away, and the discomfited old wolf rolled over and over through being so baulked. That was just what Jack had wanted and meant. He knew quite well that Wolfwald's rough hide and the shaggy hair on his back and sides were so tough, and almost spear-proof, that very likely the point would only glance off if he tried to pierce him as he had done the younger and smaller wolves. And so, when he saw his enemy sprawling, without giving him a moment to recover himself, with a single sharp bound he drove the point of the Staff right through the old brute's ribs, and pinned him to the ground. Jack slid down the Staff in half no time, and pulling out his hunting-knife—for he had had a grand subscription one handed to him when it was known he had lost his own in the perilous adventure with Giant Grim—he cut Wolfwald's weasand from ear to ear. He had no time now, though, to slit his

ears, for the two younger wolves were almost upon him. Not that he cared much for them, now that he had just slain their formidable father. He did not even take the trouble to remount ; but pulling his Staff out of the earth and the old wolf's carcase with the same effort, he swept it round his head just so as to catch the biggest of the two whelps on the legs as he was making his spring, and spoilt him for going any more until he had got his shanks mended. And a very little tap was enough to quiet the other little fellow.

After this Jack soon mounted his charger again, and from the height so gained he saw the main army of the wolves coming on. There were three or four in advance, the more reckless, or perhaps the hungriest of the lot. And there were as many, or possibly rather more, in the rear. These Jack thought were the weakest or perhaps the cowardliest of the whole troop. But the main body—Jack did not make light of the look of them. They were hardy, rough-looking, deeply-scarred veterans, who had come out of many a scrimmage with man and dog. They came loping along all together, no hurry and no confusion among them ; and Jack knew right well that close quarters with them meant that he would be upset and made wolf's-meat of in half a brace of shakes.

But General Jack was prepared for this, and had laid his plans accordingly. The one thing he was

most set upon, and was planning for all through, was to 'make a clean sweep' of the wolves in Westerdale, once and for all ; and it was in consideration of this that he adopted his present tactics. 'Those skulkers in the rear,' he thought, 'will get off by running away if I go to work with these shaggy villains first.' So he took three or four great quick bounds, and placed himself behind the very last stragglers. Then slipping down his Staff, he wielded it as he had done before, and with the very first sweep he hit two off their legs. With another sweep he fetched a third on to the ground ; and as the other two were coming at him open-mouthed, but the one a little behind the other, he charged them with his Staff held like a spear, and spitted them both through with one effort.

For you must remember what might there was in the Staff itself, from the first you ever heard of it, when it pegged holes in the solid rock with both its head and its foot. And now it helped Jack even far better than it used to help Greedy Grim.

Another thing too you must remember, and that is that the eye was as safe in the head of the Staff, once Jack had put it there, as an egg wrapped up in cotton wool and laid in a thick iron chest. And however Jack swung it about, and whatever hammering blows he gave with it, the eye never took any harm. The one danger was of Jack's getting thrown down and chewed up before he could get remounted.

Having settled the rear-guard in this summary way—Jack had no time to stop and slay the wounded—he bounded off again to the front, and found matters there quite as far advanced as he wanted—perhaps a little more so; for the white pig had been killed and eaten, and two others would never squeal again; while the wolves in general were squandering about more than he wished. So he bounded on to two of the most advanced, first one and then the other, piercing them both through, and then yelled with all his might, finishing up with a strange shrill whistle. This was the signal for all the farmers and shepherds, who had gathered round the right-hand edge of the forest, to raise a mighty shout, some of them blowing wolf-horns, and the rest setting on their dogs to bay, until there was noise enough to deafen any ordinary person. When the wolves heard this they gathered themselves more into a troop again, and seemed inclined to make away back again by the way they had come. But that would not do at all; and so Jack sent off the Raven, who was sitting on a tall tree just above the carcase of old Grizzly, whetting his beak and longing to have a good hearty dig at him, to tell the head Forester and his men, with their big fierce wolf-hounds, who had been told to be on the hill-top to prevent any such attempt, to look alive and bar the way. In a minute the blast of the wolf-horns and the deep

baying of the great wolf-hounds were heard in the rear, and the old veterans knew they must go on and fight their way in front. Still they kept in a body, and were getting desperate ; and General Jack saw no chance of charging them or breaking through the solid troop. But luck did for him just what he wanted, which was to draw them forward in straggling order. For just at this critical moment a scraggy lean old sow, with five half-grown pigs, which had been living a wild life in the forest for weeks and weeks, disturbed by the horns and the shouts of the farmers and the barking of the collies, broke out of the wood on the right into the open glade where the wolves were, and not fifty yards ahead of them. This was more than wolf flesh and blood could stand, and, before you could well look, the troop had broken up and the chase of the sow and pigs begun. But just as the two foremost brutes came up with the old sow, one on each side of her, Jack gave a sharp whistle, and, directly it was heard, six bowstrings twanged, and two wolves rolled over with arrows through them, two more were badly shot, and another had an arrow sticking in his ribs. The archers, who were the six best bowmen from the Castle, whom Jack had set in ambush in the trees near the widest part of the glade, cheered as they saw the effect of their volley, and sent four or five more shafts among the startled wolves. But they were unable to take such good

aim this time, and they only wounded two more of the enemy. By this time there were only five or six that were not more or less hurt, and they were all terribly frightened. Two of them loped off down a narrow glen to the left, where there was a sort of a cave sometimes used as a den. But our wary Jack had provided for this by digging a pitfall exactly where they were forced to pass, covering it over again quite neatly and like it was before ; and at the bottom he had kindly set three or four sharp pikes to help them to fall easy. So those two fugitives were caught this way. His next move was to hop in amidst the stragglers, speedily slaying two of them. But his blood was up, and he thought it was poor fun just to dig into them in that way, when they hadn't a chance of fighting ; and so down he slipped, and carrying his Staff like a spear again, he charged the biggest and wickedest-looking old beggar there was left, full tilt. He ran him through and through with his fierce onset ; but it was very near being his last exploit, for he had driven the Staff so firmly into the beast he had killed that he could not get it out quickly enough to turn against another savage assailant attacking him from behind. But old Greyhead saw his friend's danger, and with the fiercest CRAWNK he had ever croaked in his long life, he flew in like a flash between Jack and the enemy, blinding the eyes of the latter for a moment so that he missed his snap and tumbled over the

body of the old sow. This gave Jack time to recover himself, and with his Staff sweeping round him with a rushing swish, he rolled his antagonist over so forcibly that he turned head over heels three different times.

The battle was over now as to any more real fighting. The handful of wolves left, hardly one of them not more or less hurt, broke into the thicker wood on the right, where they were presently met by the closing-in ring of the shepherds and farmers and dogs, while the foresters were barring the way by which they had come. The archers, too, were on the look-out for snap-shots, and within half an hour there was not a single wolf left alive out of the whole great invading rout.

Then began the work of gathering the bodies of the slain all together, and by the time they were all collected, the folks were able to count no less than twenty-six big ones and five partly grown. Seven of the pigs had taken no harm, except that their tails felt very sore for some days to come, and they were so hoarse with squealing so loud and so long that even so much as a ‘pig’s whisper’ was not heard in the Dale for a week. Three of the wild pigs had escaped the teeth of the wolves ; but I am sorry to say the archers thought it would be fine sport to shoot them, and better fun still if the gallant master of the hunt would give them leave to carry them home to the Castle, and have them

for supper nicely roasted, each of them with an apple in his mouth. And, as I daresay you expect, Jack did give them leave the moment he heard their request.

Well, the wolves were all carefully skinned, and Jack had old Grizzly's skin very nicely tanned and laid down by his bedside in the new house he took his mother to live in after this last exploit of his. But that is anticipating. You may be quite sure the ravens, old and young, grandfathers and mothers, and grandchicks of both sexes, had the very jolliest feast they had ever had in their lives on the wolf-meat so abundantly provided for them. Perhaps, too, you can fancy, without my telling you, all the pretty, loving speeches old Greyhead addressed to his enemy Wolfwald, as he pranced about on his scraggy, skinless carcase, and dug his trenchant beak into the tenderest places.

One other thing goes without saying : there had to be a great rejoicing over such a deliverance as this. And, above all, there must be a great jubilee for Jack the Giant-crusher and Wolf-queller. It was fixed that it should be held in the great Hall of the Castle. All the country round, far and wide, was asked. Oxen were roasted whole, a score or two of sheep, four or five great stags, and other things corresponding, that would make your mouths water if I only mentioned half of them, were all made ready ; and the ale and the beer, and the

bratchet and mead, why, it flowed like water. And then after supper, before the dance—for of course there had to be a dance—when the hospitable boards had been cleared away, and the trestles skied up above the rafters to be out of the way, there was such a grand ceremony.

For the king had heard of Little Jack's exploits, and had sent the great and noble baron the castle belonged to, with orders to make 'Little Jack' one of his chief knights. And so Jack had to kneel down in the sight of all the flocks of people there, and have the big flashing sword laid on his shoulders, and rise up 'Sir Jack.' He wanted to be styled just plain 'Sir Jack o' the Gill,' as his mother had always been known as Auld Elsie at Gill: but they said it was not grand enough for such a famous knight as he was, and so his title of ceremony became 'Sir Jack of Ulfdale and the Crag.' But for all that the Dalesfolks seldom called him anything but the Wolf-queller or the Giant-crusher. After this ceremony was concluded, the hall having been quite made ready for dancing, and the musicians—there were more than old King Cole's 'fiddlers three' there, you may depend—having tuned up, and everything quite ready for Jack—I beg his pardon: Sir Jack—to open the ball, whom do you think he led out? Not the great baron's lady: though, like the gallant knight he was, he had to ask her first of course. Only she had said 'No; not me first, Sir Jack. I'll

dance the second dance with you.' So it wasn't the baron's lady in all her beauty and grandeur. But it was quite a little girl—at least, to look at. But, oh, she did look so pretty, and she was so tastefully dressed! Her dark hair was bound with a red ribbon, and she had a sort of graceful scarlet tippet over her bodice, and silken hose, and I don't know what besides—except that she was far-away the prettiest girl in all those crowds. And she and Sir Jack danced together, and I don't think you ever saw such a bonny couple, nor any that danced so beautifully. And then again, when Sir Jack had done his duty-dance with the great lady, and got praised up to the skies for his graceful dancing, as well as his bravery and prowess, he soon found himself once more by the side of the 'little lass in red,' as she was called by those who did not know who she really was, and I really must not try to tell you how many dances he danced with her. She, the little sly darling, hung on his arm, and made him tell her all about his fight with the wolves, and how he slew that terrible old Grizzly, the father of the horrid brute that had served her, her own self, such a sorry trick. For, as you will have guessed long before this, she was no other than Little Red-Riding-Hood herself, who had been rescued the way I told you.

Well, after this I have no doubt you are quite prepared to hear that Sir Jack the Wolf-queller and Little Red-Riding-Hood made a match of it, and

were married in due time by no one less than the Bishop himself, 'assisted by' the chief Chaplain to the Baron.

There was no fear lest Jack should not be able to afford to keep a wife now. For, with the help of his greatly-prized Staff, he had had no trouble in discovering Greedy Grim's hoard; and he had become far the richest of all the giant-slaying Jacks yet. And he had had a grand Hall built to live in—only not so grand and strong as the Castle, of course—just where the very first Hall that ever was built in these dales was placed. And I need not say there was a special tower in it, with all necessary appliances, for the famous Staff; and some day perhaps I may be able to tell you about the wonderful eye that made the Staff so mighty and so celebrated. But all I can tell you more now, is that Sir Jack and his Lady lived very happy for many years, and that she never had another fright from a wolf; but lived on as much loved as her husband was honoured, with her family round her, all taking after their father and mother, and equally well thought of by all the country round.



## TELLS, AMONG OTHER THINGS, HOW GIANT GRIM CAME BY THE WONDERFUL EYE

PERHAPS, before I proceed to tell any further stories about Sir Jack the Giant-crusher's history and remarkable exploits, it may be considered that I ought to give some account of that wonderful eye which made the Staff so mighty and him so celebrated. Some of my readers, too, might be ready to question the trustworthiness of my story of Little Red-Riding-Hood's escape from the wolf's maw, and her subsequent marriage to a hero no less renowned than Sir Jack the Giant-crusher and Wolf-queller. Whether that story is authentic or not, it certainly *ought* to be a true history. For I can't tell you how many little girls (and boys too) I have known cry bitterly over little Miss Red's unhappy fate and cruel death, as they had heard the story; and I never knew one that did not feel quite glad to think that

the nasty old wolf so soon paid the penalty of his treacherous and brute-like gluttony.

And anyway, I think my version of the story, besides being a great deal more likely than the tale as usually told, may easily be seen to be quite reasonable, and fit to be accepted as founded on much better facts than either of the others.

To be sure, I do not expect that everybody will believe me or take my story to be the true one. There is a very nice young lady I see sometimes, who is quite a friend of mine, and who is very good to me in other things, who told me one day, when I was saying something about the fairies and their doings, ‘There aren’t any fairies. It is all stories together.’ Of course she wouldn’t believe that Little Red-Riding-Hood could ever come back to life after the wolf had gobbled her up. But I wonder if that is reasonable?

When the story is told us, we see the little girl tripping along with her neat basket of nice things, and her pretty red hood over her head ; and we see the crafty old wolf come up with her, and begin to talk to her, and we seem to hear almost every word he says. And then we see him stealthily getting to the old woman’s cot, and we know all that goes on there. And after that comes the little girl herself, and we almost tremble when we hear the gruff old brute, when she says ‘What great teeth you’ve got, Grandma,’ growl out so savagely, ‘The better to eat

you with.' And then we cry outright, some of us, when the next moment he actually sets to to eat her. And why do we tremble and cry ?

I am sure it can't be because we think it is 'all stories together.' No, no, it's not that : it is because we feel that that was the thing that must have happened. And we are almost ready to jump for joy when the woodman comes in and splits the old rascal's head ; because we feel all over us that that too was just the right thing to happen. And just so, I think that when we make no doubt about the big sharp teeth, and the gruff voice, and the gobbling up, and the killing of the wolf, there's no more occasion for doubt when we hear that there may be another ending to the story, and that not such a sad one.

Besides, that story the brothers Grimm tell (they were no relation to Giant Grim, you know—he spelt his name with only one *m*), the story about the kids—that shows such things might be. But I can tell you a much more wonderful story still of the same sort, that I read in a printed book. And what was said about it was that the story was one that was told by a great many different people in different parts of the country the writer lived in, which was some part of Denmark. And the story was about getting out of a very hungry wolf's maw, and getting out alive, moreover. And this was the way it ran—

Once upon a time there lived a man and his wife in a little farm-cottage near a forest; and all the stock they had was seven sheep, a bob-tailed foal, a dog, and a cat. To tend the sheep, and take them out to feed on the common, they had a sort of a servant-lad about fourteen years old. One day the lad went out with the sheep to the pasture-place, taking his dinner with him, of course. Presently a wolf loped up to him and said, ‘Those are very nice-looking sheep. Are they yours?’ ‘Just that,’ said the lad. ‘Hand me over your dinner,’ called out the wolf, ‘or else I’ll eat one of your sheep.’ ‘I’ll be shot if I do,’ answered the lad. So the wolf gobbled up one of the sheep. .

Next day, when the lad took the sheep out as before, up came the wolf again; and matters proceeded exactly as they had done on the yesterday. And so it went on till the wolf had eaten all the sheep up.

The lad’s master made a terrible row, of course. But all the same he set the lad to attend to the bob-tail foal. One day he went out into the waste to tend the foal, and in a minute there was the wolf again, and he said, ‘You boy, give me that dinner of yours; or else I’ll eat your foal.’ ‘Dashed if I will,’ said the lad; and in a trice there wasn’t much left of the foal.

When the boy told his master what had befallen, he shouted out ‘Be off with you; search the world

through until you find the sheep and the foal again.'

Well, the lad did as he was told, although he knew only too well that old Graylegs had really eaten them up. When he had walked a little bit of the way, he took out his dinner and began to munch away. Up came the wolf again, and growled out 'Give me that grub of yours, or else I'll eat you up body and bones.' 'Not a bit of it,' said the boy; and so the wolf gobbled him up atop of the rest.

The folk of the farm thought it long of the boy coming home, and so they sent the farm-servant out to seek the lad up. He had not gone very far before he met the wolf, and said to him, quite civilly, 'Please, sir, have you seen a lad, seven sheep, and a bob-tailed foal?'

'Ay,' said the wolf, 'that have I; and they lie in my wame rumbling and tumbling. And there's jolly well room for you too.' And with that the wolf ate the man up at a mouthful.

The folk at the farm began to think the farm-carle had been gone a long time, and so they sent out the farm-lass to seek him. She too fell in with the wolf almost immediately, and speired of him 'Had he seen a lad, seven sheep, a bob-tailed foal, and a farm-carle?' 'Ay,' said the wolf, 'they all lie in my wame, and tumble and rumble there. And there's plenty of room for you too.' And so down his throat she goes in a flask.

Then the master goes out to seek the missing ones, and after the same brief dialogue, he too is disposed of in the same manner.

Next, out goes the mistress on the quest, and with the same issue. The dog follows the mistress, and then the cat, and all with the same interchange of question and answer, and with the final disappearance of pussy down the wolf's accommodating gullet.

But, by this time, the brute had eaten so many it wasn't the least easy to find comfortable quarters for them all. And so it came to pass that the cat and the dog got to fighting ; and between them they scratched the wolf's wame open, and in a minute out plumped the lad, with the seven sheep, the bob-tailed foal, the carle, the maid, the master, the wife, the dog, and the cat ! And they were all just as much alive and kicking as ever they had been. The next thing, of course, was for them all to fall upon the wolf in a body, and precious quick they were in making an end of him. And that little bit of work done, they all went home together, as jolly as so many sand-boys.

Now, anybody that likes can read that story for himself in a book written by a man called Svend Grundtvig, the English of the title of his book being *Ancient Danish Recollections*—*minder* he calls them ; and he is known to have taken very great trouble and pains in collecting such stories everywhere he could hear of them. And surely, after that, no one

will think it so very strange or extravagant that one little girl only should have ‘plumped out’ of our wolf’s wame. That does not call for anything like so big a ‘swallow’ as that parlous Danish wolf must have had !

But besides these authentic Danish histories, there are plenty nearer home for those who live in, or know, these dales where Beanley Bank, and Jack Ing, and Wood-head, are to be found. Take, for instance, the remarkable stories of Giant Wade, and his wife Bell, and their lively little baby-son, which we read in such a serious book as Dr. Young’s *History of Whitby*. And what the Doctor says is, that young Wade—it surely can hardly be right to call him little Wade, or baby Wade, I think—could, and did, throw a stone that must have weighed tons and tons, across the valley from Sleights Moor to Swarthoue Moor, a distance of not much more than two miles, let us say. But let us have Dr. Young’s own words about the matter. ‘In the building of Mulgrave and Pickering castles Wade and his wife Bell divided their labours, a single Giant being sufficient for rearing each castle: but having only one hammer between them, it was necessary to toss it backward and forward, giving a shout every time it was thrown, that when the one threw it to Mulgrave or to Pickering, the other might be ready to catch it! ‘Wade’s causey,’ or “Wade’s Wife’s causey,” as the Roman Road has been called, was formed by them

in a marvellously short time, Wade paving and Bell bringing him stones. Once or twice her apron-strings gave way, leaving a large heap of stones on the spot. Young Wade, even when an infant, could throw a rock, several tons weight, to a vast distance ; for one day when his mother was milking her cow near Swarthoue, the child whom she had left on Sleights Moor became impatient for his milk ; and seizing a stone of vast size, heaved it across the valley, and hit his mother so hard with it that, though she was not hurt, the stone was, having a piece knocked out of it where it hit against her body ; and the impression could still be seen till the stone itself was broken up a few years ago to mend the highways.'

There are other stories you may read about Giant Wade and his wife and baby ; but I think those about Bell's carrying such big heaps of stones, and the baby-giant throwing that huge block such a long way—and I have myself seen the place where it used to lie—are the most in my way when I have got such a story to relate as the one I have to tell you about the wonderful eye that once was in Giant Grim's keeping.

Because this throwing of big stones about seems to have been quite a customary sort of amusement with our northern giants. So common, indeed, that there is quite a customary phrase for it. It is *steenkasten*, which means both the feat of throwing

and the distance thrown, unless I mistake. And I remember one story detailing an exploit of this sort in which the thing thrown was a giant's leather glove filled with an inconceivable quantity of broken pieces of rock ; and a lot of others in which the stones thrown were described as being as big as a house.

But what is more to the point still, do you remember my telling you about there being a place in little Fryup Side, just up above Crossley Side farm-house, where the side of the hill is splitting away from the moor above, and where there is sure to be a terrible big fall of earth and stones and rock some day? And do you also recollect that there is, just where the crack shows most plainly, a broken pathway that creeps up just across the main rift? Because on the farther or south side of that pathway—'old wife's way,' I have heard it called—is what is left of a considerable cairn of large stones, no great way from the edge of the bank-side. Well, between that heap of stones and the pathway as it proceeds over the moor from the bank-edge, there lay, not very much more than fifty years ago (as I have been told by people who had often seen them), two quite long and terribly heavy stones, one of them two or three score yards farther from the edge of the moor than the other. These stones too have been broken up by the tiresome road-makers long ago, and I daresay there are not now half a dozen

people left who know anything about them. All the same, ‘thereby hangs a tale.’

There were two giants, once upon a time, who met one day on the highest end of that queer isolated hill, at one end of which is the Crag Wood, and also, as of course you remember, the Dungeon, or the scene of Jack the Giant-crusher’s first exploit, and the other or higher end towers above Fairy Cross Plains. What they were about, or were supposed to be about, none of the folks who told me of the stones and the story belonging to them, seemed to have any notion. Some seemed to think they might just be taking a walk, and one or two that they were perhaps busy with some work which called for the use of such monstrously big stones.

The tellers of the story were not at all agreed, either, about the exact place at which the giants met. Some said it was where I said just now, on the end of the long hill farthest away from the Crag Wood end; and others said that it was on the ridge the other side of Great Fryup, not so very far from the Hart Leap, only more up on the ridge overlooking Great Fryup Dale.

As for myself, I think this last-mentioned place not only quite as likely as the other to be the true place, but much more likely, because if they undertook to pitch stones of seven or eight yards long and a couple of yards wide and thick, at all,

it was surely a much better trial of strength and activity to pitch them right across Great Fryup and Little Fryup and that intermediate hill included, than merely just chucking their playthings across insignificant Little Fryup only. And, besides, I think I may have just a glimmering little notion about the way in which it came to pass that there was any stone-casting at all. For I happen to know, and on the same authority as that I had for what I told you about the crushing of Giant Grim, and the quelling of the wolves, something about both of these stone-throwing giants, and how they came to start such a match at all. I never could ascertain their names exactly, but I always understood that the one of them was as cantankerous an old brute as even a giant could be, and that he had a nickname that, in English, meant Surly-bones, or something like that, and the other was sometimes called Giant Sly, because he wasn't quite such a slow-witted stupid as most of the giants were.

Well, they met one fine morning, not on Cock Heads, as you remember, but on the Great Fryup Ridge, our side of Hart Leap, and, as old Surly was even crosser than usual that morning, they soon began to 'differ' (as the Yorkshireman calls it) as to their several merits as giants, and their claims to regard from that point of view, such as which of them could eat most porridge

without bursting ; which of them had got the nicest princess—for princesses had not become so scarce then as afterwards—for his housekeeper ; which of them had the biggest treasure-hoard ; whose hen laid the most and the biggest golden eggs ; which of the golden harps that belonged to them—for they each had one—played the nicest tunes ; nay, even, which of them could hurl a stone half as long and nearly as thick as themselves the farthest.

Well, after a little, the dispute waxed very furious, and such a clamour and uproar hadn't been heard in Fryup ever since the last ice-stream had ground its gritty, crashing way down that gate. One of them grew so savage he picked up a big lump of freestone and crushed it to sand in his horny old paw. The other pulled up a huge fir tree by the roots, and broke it across his knee as if it had been a rotten twig. Then the first caught up a large boulder of granite that lay near by and, as he saw, had a crack in it which the other did not spot, and hitting it against his elbow broke it into two pieces. Handing one of them to the other (who looked surprised), he said to him, 'Now, if you are half a giant, bite that in two.'

I said just now this fellow was not one of the wisest among giants, and so, thinking he could easily crunch a stone up he had just seen cracked with a mere blow of the elbow, he stuck it into

his mouth and gave it a real good giant's bite. But it did not come in two quite so easily as he had thought, and all he did was to bite one of his strongest teeth out of his head ; and a stunning tooth it was, as any one who has ever picked up those giant teeth, that may sometimes be found even still, will be very well aware.

Well, you hardly want me to tell you that old Surly, who was crabby enough before, wasn't any the more amiable when this happened to him. He was savage enough for anything ; and the savager he grew the stupider he became. But that was just what Giant Sly (who wasn't such a dunderhead for a giant as he might have been, you remember) wanted to befall. So, pretending to be sorry for the accident, he began to flatter up old Surly, and tell him what great feats he could do in the stone-casting way ; and that no doubt, if they agreed to try their strength that way, he, Gaptooth, would easily beat him, Sly, at that game.

Gaptooth growled out a surly acceptance of the challenge ; and as there were two earth-stones lying near one another close by, of about the same size, it was agreed they should each take one and shy them as far as they could, right over the two Fryup Dales with the ridgy hill between them.

Giant Sly, however, who had kept his temper and his wits too, hadn't meant the trial to rest simply on the strongest arm and the most practice in stone-

throwing. On the contrary, he had a little plan of his own. He had noticed, on pulling the tree up just now, that one of its roots had grown through a hole in one of the two stones, and had been broken off close to the boll, while towards the edge of the cliff it ran, a little bit below the surface, right on to the brae, and then grew in among the rifts of the rocks on the face below the edge. And he thought that most likely his competitor, in his sullen rage, would not notice that, when it came to each of them taking up his stone and putting his strength into the necessary effort. And he laid his plans accordingly.

But besides all this, he had another plan in his head, which he thought the present condition of affairs might help him in bringing to effect. He was well aware that old Surly had somewhere or other a most wonderful possession of the treasure sort, such as no other giant had ever been known to have. He did not know exactly what it was, nor yet where it was ; only he had his suspicions. Neither did he know exactly how the surly old Gaptooth had come by it. But he was almost sure he had got it in a bit of a breeze he was known to have had with the dwellers under that great round hill on the right hand side of the road going from what is now the church at Fryup.

You have heard about them, no doubt, and the fuss they made ages and ages ago, when the folks were not only planning, but had actually begun to build what was meant to be Danby Church on the

flat that has long been called ‘Fairy Cross Plains.’ But if you have not, then I must tell you ; and it is a story resting on the same authority, and quite as authentic as any of the like stories told in many parts of England, and especially North England, and in more places still in Norway, Sweden, and Denmark. There were many people, near upon half a century ago, who used to tell how, as ‘everybody knew,’ it was meant to build the church at or on the Plains, and that after they had got the stone cut and led, and the timber ready, and had dug out the foundations, and got the groundwork laid, and the walls so far begun that they could be seen rising out of the ground ; how all this work had been undone during the night ; that the stones that had been laid in course had been squandered about anyhow ; and the work had all to be done over again the next day. And all this happened over and over again ; so that, at some weeks’ end, the church was no nearer getting built than it had been at the very beginning.

Only, as the old lady who seemed to know most about it told me once and again, it was the Fairies, who danced in those wonderful rings (some of which I saw there myself only quite a short time ago), who would not let the church be built there, because the noise of the bells would have bothered them so, they would have been obliged to leave the Plains altogether : which makes it pretty certain they must have lived somewhere quite near. And so they did, accord-

ing to this old lady's understanding ; and she told me one day where a fairy man, in a green jerkin, and with a little queer-looking conical cap on his head, had been seen to go in.

But I didn't think she was quite altogether right ; and I did think that there was another and at least equally likely account of all that went on in connection with this building-up and pulling-down business. And this is the tale as I know it.

After this nightly pulling-down of the work which had been done during the day had gone on for some weeks, at last the folks who were mainly concerned in the building—I don't mean the masons and the carpenters only, but the Chaplain (for there was no regular priest for Danby in those days, I have been told) and the Baron at the Castle (and I believe he had his armour on, and his sword by his side, and his helmet and his lance and his shield, and everything)—determined to watch one night, and see who it was that did all this wanton and provoking mischief. And who do you think it was ? I am sure you don't know, and will never be able to guess. So I must tell you.

Well, it wasn't the Fairies, but it was the folk who lived below that great conical hill they call the Round Hill. And really and truly these folks were the worst enemies the Fairies had. They were not very tall nor yet very stout. But their HEADS ! If only you had seen them, I guess you would not have

got over the sight the same day, perhaps not even the next. For their heads were as big as the buoys in Whitby Harbour ; or, let us say, a baby-balloon about two days old. And every one of them was uglier than every one of the rest. Some of their mouths weren't big enough to whistle with, and some went from ear to ear. Some had their eyes below their cheek-bones, and some had them round the corners, and some had them one in one place and one in another.

But MY ! weren't they strong, just ! There were not many of them, but they made the stones that had been built up during the day fly like feathers ! For they set to work in a moment without looking about. And then from their hiding-places out came the Baron and the Chaplain and the workmen. 'Hi ! you chaps, you stop that !' shouted out the Chaplain. For a moment the mischievous crew seemed to be taken aback. But it was only for a moment, for in a trice they made it quite clear they weren't going to be stopped by only a Chaplain ; for they went to work more resolute than ever.

That indeed was just what he had expected ; and so he had got the Subprior and the Chanter, who had come to the Grange, not far from where the church now stands, a day or two before, to come and take part with the watching party. And when the Subprior began to exorcise or conjure them, and the Chanter—Precentor they called him at home—began

to sing strong psalms and hallowed chants at them, they saw that the matter was getting serious ; and some of them were for giving up, and one of them actually sneaked off towards the Round Hill. But the one with the biggest head and quite the ugliest face stood his ground, and the strife and contest went on and on. Sometimes old Ugly-face seemed to have the best of it, and sometimes the Subprior with his silver crozier, and the Chanter with his canticles, and the Chaplain with his holy water. But neither side could quite master the other, and it seemed doubtful which way it would go.

But the holy men had got another stone in their pouch yet, and they meant to sling it before they had done. It was the time of year when the nights were shortest ; and the good Canons knew very well that if their enemies were just caught by the rising sun, the moment the first beam fell upon them they would burst into a thousand shivers just like a Rupert's drop when its tail is pinched off. And of course their hope was to be able to keep the ball agoing till sunrise, for this was a part of their plan.

Well, streaks of light began to show in the north-east ; the Chaplain began to use his sprinkler more briskly than ever, and drove some of the weaker ones rather away, and even got between them and the Round Hill. The Subprior took his seat steadfastly on a great flat stone laid ready for all the columns on

one side of the doorway to be reared upon ; the Precentor stood with both his feet on the very biggest beam on the whole ground, which, indeed, was meant to support the rood-screen ; and the scrimmage was worse than any ‘French and English’ struggle you ever saw, or the fiercest rally at a big football match. Old Ugly-face grew desperate, and with one wild, last, frantic effort, he seized the Precentor’s beam with one hand, upsetting him topsy-turvy as he did so, and the Subprior’s stone with the other, and hurled the beam right over the Rigg to where the church now stands, and it was his intention that the stone should follow the beam. But, just as he was loosing it from his hand, the first ray of the rising sun caught him, and while he burst up into fancy flinders himself, the stone flew wide, and not far enough, and stuck into the ground at the edge of the cliff on the other side of the ridge, not so very far away from Botton House Farm, where it may still be seen sticking queerly out from the brae-edge.

I believe there were only two of the ugly crew got safe back to the shelter of the Round Hill ; and they were too weak, or perhaps too ignorant, to know how to close their dwelling-place properly up. It might be that ordinary mortals, blind as they almost always are to anything of the sort, might not be able to find the entrance. But others, such as fairies, or perhaps an occasional sharp one among the usually lumber-headed old giants—they were not blind. And

so these two or three poor refugees soon came to have rather a bad time of it.

And all the more because old Ugly-face and his crew had behaved, in days not so very long gone by, with such sad cruelty to the fairies who had used to live quietly enough in and about that part. And one terrible grievance was that old Ugly-face in the course of a fairy-hunt one day—a sort of sport he was shamefully fond of—had caught the Fairy Princess, who was much the same as Queen of the Fairies of all that part, and had kept her a prisoner always afterwards, instead of clipping one of her wings—as he did with the common fairies, and turning them off, when that was done, for the children to run after and catch and worry as much as they liked. And I am sure you will never guess what sort of a prison it was the poor Fairy Princess was shut up in.

But one thing that I may tell you now is, that the crabby, surly, savage old giant, Gaptooth, as we might have nicknamed him, whom we left just going to try against his craftier fellow-giant which could throw those two little blocks of stone, that had been named, the farthest—he had known about it, though perhaps not quite all about it, for long and long.

Now, no doubt you have heard or read that those horrid ugly creatures—sometimes they were called trolls, and sometimes dwarfs ; though it wasn't meant by that that they were very diminutive or quite little

folks—were wonderfully clever and skilful workmen, and in all sorts of different crafts. From a sword that would cut through everything, and that could not be broken or have its sharp edge blunted, to a needle so fine that you could not see its eye without a magnifying glass, and with balls of thread to match, miles and miles long, and no bigger than marbles, there was nothing the making of which was too hard for them, or came amiss to them. Why, I heard of one who carpentered up a ship big enough to carry six hundred men, and well found in all the necessary stores, such that, when the man it was given to did not want to use it as a ship, he could just fold it up and carry it about in his waistcoat pocket! That, I used to think, was one of the most wonderful pieces of work I ever heard of, as turned out by even these clever craftsmen. But there were many others almost equally wonderful I could tell you of, if I had not something else to tell just now.

Well, these cunning workmen, among them, made a prison for the Fairy Princess ; and they made it in the form or fashion of an eye. And the few Fairies that were still left knew of it, and old Giant Surly knew of it : indeed, I am not sure he did not get to know of it from the Fairies themselves. For one thing is quite certain : namely, that the Fairies and the Giant had a good deal of talk about it after the misfortune that had befallen the Dwarfs of the Round Hill. Well, to shorten the story a little, the Fairies

undertook to help the Giant in finding his way into that same Hill, and, as far as they were concerned, he might keep anything he found there that he liked, on condition only that he gave up to them their dear Princess and the prison she was confined in. Perhaps though, you may be thinking—‘What need was there for him, especially being such a curmudgeon as he was, to make any condition of any sort with them? for surely the way was as open to him as to them to go in if he liked, now there was no one, or next to no one, of the late occupants to bar the way, or blind it so that it could not be found.’

But if you are thinking so, you will be overlooking some particulars that must not by any means be forgotten. First, you have to recollect that those lightsome Fairies might easily go where lumbering old Surly-wigs could not. Then you have to consider that they not only might, but did, know a lot more about the place, and all that belonged to it, than he possibly could: for hadn’t they been dwelling in the dells and glades, and about the clear springs and mossy caves there, nobody knows how long before those horrid dwarfs came and dispossessed them, and worried them by day and hunted them by night? And then, besides, don’t you know that it was only on one or two particular nights that the big round houes and hills that were occupied by that ugly-duckling crew of inhabitants, were raised and seemed to be set on pillars high enough to let a giant, at

least if he were only a small one, get really in? And this was what the Fairies knew, but the Giant didn't; and so, you see, they could easily make their knowledge a matter of bargain with old Surly.

Well, the bargain was made, and the Giant, as was said, was to have all the precious things and the crafty pieces of work he could find, and everything he could lay his greedy hands on, except that cunning prison chamber with the Princess in it. This he promised, on the faith of a giant, to restore and give up to the Fairies: not that he really meant to do so, the cheating old rascal!

Now it so happened that there was not long to wait after this bargain was made. The great tide of the year, when giants as well as fairies and other such beings were specially on the alert, was to arrive in a day or two: and when it came, the Round Hill was upheaved, and entry from the world without became possible. Under the guidance of the Fairies, Giant Surly was taken so that he could make his way in. He was not long in finishing with the wretched survivors of the fight about the building of the church, and then he began his search. In a few words, he soon found the cunningly-made prison, and kept it too, in spite of all the distressed Fairies could do, and his own pledged word of honour as a giant.

Well, now that I have told you all this, we can very well go back to our two giants whom we left just ready to try which of them could chuck his

special little cherry-stone the farthest. There they stood, and there lay the said cherry-stones, seven or eight yards long, each of them, if you remember ; and only the terms of the contest had to be settled. Says the crafty one to the crabby one, ‘ I say : there’s no fun in chucking these playthings about for nothing. Let’s have something on. And you, such a terrible strong champion too ! Well ! What shall it be ? ’

Old Surly grumbled out a giant’s curse, and told his opponent to go to the coldest pit in Hela’s ice-home.

‘ No, thanks ; I’d rather not,’ was the answer, but accompanied by the proposal that he would wager his little bantam-hen, that laid pearls in place of eggs, against Surly-wigs’ plunder that he got that night out of the Round Hill, ‘ which,’ said Crafty, ‘ you keep hugger-muggered up in that secret inner chink in your cave at home that the Fairies told me of.’

Now, this was a dodge on our crafty friend’s part. The Fairies hadn’t told him anything of the sort. In fact, they had told him something quite different : for they had said they were afraid to go near the cave. And besides that, they had said that they thought he was so afraid of losing his principal prize —he had never found out how to use it, though—that he always carried it about with him wherever he went. And so Giant Crafty wasn’t at all disappointed when Surly yowled out in a rage ‘ that he

hadn't got such a thing, that he hadn't a secret chink in the cave, that he'd pay the Fairies out for telling such lies about him, that they hadn't got much good by their spying, not to know better than that,' and so forth.

'All right,' says Giant Crafty, 'don't put yourself in a rage. I'll wager my banty against your plunder, wherever it is, that I throw this stone that I've got my foot on farther than you throw that one that is lying nearer to you than to me.'

'Done,' cries old Surly. 'If you like to lose it's all one to me. You are the youngest. You throw first.'

So Crafty, having got things exactly as he had wanted, took up his stone without making any trouble about it, and sent it without any apparent extra effort, roaring and rushing through the air, over hill and dale, a hundred times faster than the Flying Scotchman goes, and marking a fiery track like a rainbow in shape, because it went with such mighty speed as to burn all the oxygen out of the air as it tore its way through. And at last it lit on its end just clear of the edge of the bank, at the place I told you these giant-cast stones continued to lie up to sixty or seventy years ago. After striking the earth there, it took one long jump as it bounded, and after that settled quietly down into its place.

'There, old chap,' said Crafty, turning to the other with the nastiest sneer he could make his

pudding of a face take on, as if quite certain Surly couldn't even clear the ridgy hill, and much more the dale beyond—'there, beat that if you can!'

This taunt made old Surly furious ; and, never stopping to see all clear, or even to mend his hold, he howled out with the savagest scrike ever uttered by a raving giant, 'Stand out of the way you pusilling of a dwarf, you, and see a real giant-cast.' But the root that, in his rage, he hadn't noticed, held, though only for a second, against the mighty force put upon it, and partly spoilt his throw. And, what was more unlucky still for the thrower, it made him stagger over the very brink of the brae with the cliff below it, from which he had made his cast. At that very critical moment when he was still trying to recover his balance, a huge sod thrown by some unseen hand or set of hands, hit him fair on the back, and over he went with a horrid roar and a horrider squelch. Giant Crafty hadn't thrown it, and he had not even seen it thrown. But he had a shrewd guess as to who did throw it, and if he hadn't had, he would have known all about it in a second or two. For, before he could take a single step—he was stuck fast for a moment, but more by surprise than by concern or dread—he was conscious of a little figure in green standing on his right shoulder close to his ear, and heard a sweet little piping voice saying to him, 'Now we have paid him out. He has got our Princess in her magic prison

sewed up in a leather bag under his left arm. You can take it if you like. But as we do not wish you any harm after what you have helped to happen, we give you a warning. THERE IS A SPELL LAID UPON IT. It will be the destruction of every one who gets and keeps it until it gets into the ownership of a Christian. And after that, she will be restored to us. If you have an enemy or any one you wish very *well* to, let *him* have it.'

Giant Crafty made his way down to where his fallen antagonist lay, all crushed and smashed up with his own weight, and after some trouble found the case the Green-one had told him of, and after more trouble still, got it unstitched. When he saw what it was that was done up so carefully, he did not seem to think it looked so very fetching. And besides, he had had time to think old Ugly-face had had it, and had come to grief. And Surly-wigs had had it, and had come to grief. So he thought to himself, 'I'm not so particularly attached to Cousin Grim. Both he and his mother were nasty to me in that shindy we had. And then, poor fellow, he lost his only eye in that blow-up when the whinstone dyke created that blessed shine with its eruption. Why, he'd just jump at such a chance. I think I'll go and tell him of it.'

But first, he thought he might as well go and have a look at the place where Giant Surly's stone had fallen. He found it was some score or two of

yards short of the place where his own lay, and that as far as that went he was the winner on the cast. All the same, he did not seem very regretful that things had happened as they had, and that now there was no occasion for him to make good his claim either by force of arms or at law.

Well, Giant Crafty didn't take long in reaching Giant Grim's, though it might have taken you and me a good deal longer; and he found the old fellow in not the best of tempers. For he had only just finished picking the bones of a boy who had newly come home from school for the holidays, and who had been so badly fed and so terribly 'crammed' at the earliest 'Dotheboys-Hall' of all, that he was neither meaty nor fit to eat, much less toothsome. However, when he heard what his giant-cousin had come about, he left off grumbling, finished the few big mussels he had left, to top up with, and under Crafty's guidance, bundled off at once for the treasure-trove he had just heard of; and as you may suppose, it was not long before the precious eye was in the long disused socket in old Grim's forehead. Nor yet was it long before he found out, too, that it was just as 'wick' out of his head as in; and then, when he began to consider the way in which his various cousins of near or distant degree were getting polished off the face of the earth by Beanstalk Jacks and Giant-killer Jacks, and the other enemies their disagreeable habits of stealing princesses, dining on

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boys and girls, prigging white heifers, throwing rocks about without caring if they fell atop of a village, and so forth, stirred up against them, he bethought himself of pulling up a tree or two, until he could find one to suit for whittling into shape as a staff with a good knobby head, making a sort of socket in it for the eye, so that when he went to sleep himself, still he might have a waking sentinel always at hand. You know already how he was, after all, though a good long time later, no doubt, circumvented by Sir Jack the Giant-crusher ; but you don't know, at least I did not tell you, that as long as Sir Jack lived, the eye as well as the Staff remained willingly with him, and helped him in everything because he was a Christen-lad, and because, growing to be a Christen-man, he had paved the way for the eventual deliverance of the imprisoned Princess of the Fairies.

Some day, no doubt, I shall have something more to tell you of Sir Jack's exploits, in all of which he was so strangely helped by the wonderful experience, knowledge, and virtue of the Staff, all of which proceeded simply from the 'Fairy Princess' who animated the eye which dwelt in the great knob-head of the same.



## HOW SIR JACK MASTERED THE WOEFUL WORM OF THE WHORLE HILL AND THE ELDRITCH ERNE OF ARNCLIFF.

I WONDER if you remember how, at the beginning of my story about Quelling the Wolves, I told you that if you went up that hilly moorland road that leads from Castleton to Kirkby Moorside, and reached a certain point on it, and then looked in the right directions, you could see two places called Wolfdale in the old days, and a row of shooting butts called Wolfpit Slack butts. If you do, you will not be the least puzzled if I tell you that, if instead of looking the Westerdale Wolfdale way or the Wolfpit Slack way, you had turned right round and looked back over the road you had come, you would have seen a very remarkable object; and the name of that remarkable object is Freeburgh Hill.

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Of course you remember the Round Hill I mentioned in my last story ; the hill, that is, under which those ugly dwarfs or trolls lived till they were mastered by the holy men in the fight about the place where the church was to be built. But I don't think I told you why the hill I speak of was called the Round Hill. Well, the reason is that it is as round at the bottom and all up the sides as if it had been measured and worked out with compasses and all sorts of 'mathematical instruments,' as they are called. Its base is round, and if it is measured half-way up its sides it is round, and it is round at the top. I can't explain the cause of its shape to you. All I can say is that it was most likely shaped that way when the ice was grinding out these dales that we call Danby Dale and Fryup Dale, and so forth ; or, at least, not long afterwards. I have seen mines dug into it to get the jet that lies hid in it near the bottom, and I have got a piece myself as long as my arm from the elbow to the finger-tips. I wonder if those ugly but clever Dwarfs stored it there.

But it is the shape of the hill I want you to notice, not only because it is so regular and shapely-looking, but because there are two others like it in this country, only much bigger ; and the story I am going to tell you has something to do with both of them. And Freeburgh Hill is one of the two.

Now, in my time, I have heard two or three very cock-and-bull stories about Freeburgh Hill. For

instance, I have heard that it was thrown up as a houe or burial-mound, and that, moreover, although there is rock that may be quarried close to the very top of it. And then I have heard that another wiseacre makes it out to be an artificial hill with a moat round it. And others have called it an 'ancient druidical temple, thrown up' to be so used. But although these and such as these are cock-and-bull stories, still there's another story that I shouldn't like to call a cock-and-bull story, that was told me almost as soon as ever I set eyes on Freeburgh Hill, or indeed had much more than learned that that was its name; and this is a story of a sort that is met with in other parts and places besides this dales-country of ours, so that surely there must be something in it, although, from what I have gathered in one way or another, and am now going to tell you, I can't help thinking that our great Round Hill of Cleveland is the true place, and the others hardly so likely to be so really.

Well, the story that I have heard is that there is somebody beneath that big hill—not buried there—I don't mean that; but as alive as you and I are, only asleep with a strange mysterious sort of sleep, out of which he and those that are with him—for he is not alone—will wake up some day, when the need for such awaking shall be, and do wonderful things in help of the right.

I am sure you have all heard of good King

Arthur, and of his brave knights, and all the wonderful exploits they achieved either singly or together ; and some of you, at all events, will have heard the old, old tradition I have just referred to, that they are not dead like other folks who lived so long ago, but are mysteriously asleep somewhere, waiting for some marvellous summons in time of greatest need to come forth ready for the fight, and certain to prevail in the end—of course fighting for the rightful side. Well, it is this old-world or old-wife story I have heard told about Freeburgh Hill. King Arthur is there with all his glorious retinue of Knights of the Round Table ; and they are all fully armed and in expectant waiting for the summons. The Round Table too is there, and every man sits in his own proper seat and order. All their gallant steeds are there as well, and all the attendants. The King's brave hounds, moreover, are present, with those noble falcons which were sent him by the King of Iceland—at least, all but one of them, and I will tell you what became of that presently. And, above all, the King's glorious Standard, the Dragon streamer famed all over the world, was there, but is not now ; and I must tell you how such a miss as that had come to befall. And I have myself no doubt that the great battle, the summons to which they are awaiting, is the same great conflict spoken of in another great Cleveland foretelling with which I am familiar, about a time when a fleet of hundreds of

ships is to come and find anchorage in Dobham Pool, very near to Redcar; and when such torrents of blood will be shed that all the streams and rivulets in the country-side adjacent to the field of battle will roll down gore to the sea, knee-deep. And any one will readily believe that, who reads the story of King Arthur, and learns how he and his knights made nothing of felling horse and rider fully armed at one stroke, and walked about in the blood of the enemies they had slain in battle almost up to their knightly girdles. But to go on with the equally true tale I was going to tell you.

All that I have been telling you does not rest, you know, only on the old prophecy or spaedom I have mentioned, but, as in other like cases, where national heroes are waiting under cover of some mighty mount (or wherever the appointed place may be), it has been seen to be so—been actually revealed to mortal eyes. Yes, and even opportunities for mortal daring have been offered, though not always as frankly accepted or as boldly employed and improved. Because, in something the same way that, as I told you, the houes inhabited by the trolls or dwarfs might be seen on certain nights standing exposed, as if lifted up on great pillars, so it was wont to be on some occasions, or to some gifted or specially favoured or endowed individuals, in the case of these mysterious resting-places of departed heroes—I mean that such indi-

viduals were permitted or enabled to see within the awesome precincts, and behold the state and the splendour and the imposing bearing of the mighty throng, and the service and all the ceremonious observance of the worthies of the Great Table, with the mightiest and worthiest of all in his majesty and solemn dignity. And sometimes there was a sword in a marvellous sheath hanging at the entrance, or it might be a golden horn, hanging suspended at about a man's height from the ground, and the venerable figure of an aged man with a great white beard waving down far below his waist, might be seen by the privileged or gifted person who was able, or allowed, to see the sight, passing strange as it was. And he would tell this chance beholder what the vision was, and that, if he had no fear, he might try to draw the sword or wind the horn ; but that the issue, if he did but tremble so as to shake a full horn of water, would be such as to make it better for him if he had not been born. Some, the stories go on to say, tried, and faltered before the sword had begun to blaze with its mystic light on being just moved a little in its scabbard ; and others quailed before the sound had begun fully to form itself in the wondrous womb of the horn. And then such unearthly peals of contemptuous laughter and scornful mockery had followed the fleeing cowards that they fell into some foul bog, or were lost in some treacherous morass, or perhaps

became gibbering idiots all the coming days of their lives. Others, again, one or two in the lapse of the ages, had been known to draw the sword half-way, or even fully, and then to have been palsied with terror, and struck as if by lightning with its intolerable brightness ; or, on the other hand, to have put breath enough into the horn to hear the beginning of its mighty harrowing tone, and to see the warriors beginning to move in their places, and to hear the rattling of their harness, more dread to listen to than the deep roll of the Thunder-god's Hammer on the vault of heaven ; and, seeking to put away the horn in their panic, had been stricken dead and senseless by the blast returning to the mouth-piece.

But one man—so the story runs, and I think he must have been a very near relation of the lad who ‘wanted to know what fear was,’ and what ‘trembling felt like’—had the hardihood to persist, neither fearing nor trembling. They said he was strangely bred and born, that he was the seventh son of his mother, and that she was a fearsome spaewife, and that his father knew more than that one of Odin’s ravens which had to do with the past. They said, too, that, though all his six brothers were as strong as the sea-lion, and as furious as the ice-bear, and so vehement that no man could stand before them, yet all of them gave place to their youngest brother, and that no berserk was like to

him for sheer contempt of what would have made all others blench.

Well, he, this youngest brother, came to the awful portal one night when it was standing open. It was the shortest night of the year. He looked in on the glorious pageant, and marked the throng, as fearsome as it was brave to see. In loud tones that rang like trumpet-notes he asked the greybeard the meaning of the sight, and all that there was to be told was told to him. He was told of the parlous sword, and of the fearsome horn, and of what had befallen, and would befall again, to all who faltered, even ever so slightly. But this man—Bergulf the Reckless was the name he was known by—did not hesitate for an instant, but strode masterfully by. Then wrenching the sword from its sheath with his right hand, with his left he seized the horn and winded a blast which not only might have roused the dead, but did rouse the seemingly lifeless figures grouped around the table.

Starting up from their repose with rattling arms and rustling mail, there was awesome menace in their stony eyes as the intruder strode straight on to the high seat of the king. He still held the sword in his right hand, while with the other he grasped the staff of the pennon. But he could not move it. The king gazed at him for a moment with a fixed inquiring glance, and one of the falcons left its perch and flew to take its stand on the daring

mortal's outstretched wrist. Slowly the king turned half round in his seat, and in a hollow tone, dread indeed to listen to, he slowly said, 'Neither the man nor the hour !'

Bergulf saw no more, heard no more, knew no more. When he became conscious again, he was on the lone moorside. You may see the place to this day—no ling grows there, and the short grass is greener than elsewhere. But he was not alone ! For there, beside him, was the falcon, and, coiled as near as its dreadful folds would allow, was the Dragon of the Standard !

But it was no Greenland falcon such as earthly Icelandic rulers could acquire, that Bergulf gazed upon ; no mere embroidered semblance of a dragon, stiff with gold and gems, that lay at his feet. The one was a feathered fowl to which the Swiss Lammergeyer was but a chick newly hatched, and the other a 'worm' huge enough nearly to ring the giant hill whence it had issued, round but half-way up from its base. And these were the Eldritch Erne of Arncliff, and the Woeful Worm of the Whorle Hill. For it was thither they accompanied the fated man who was now—but not for good—their master.

People that know the Arncliff woods, and the beautiful Mount Grace ruins, know also the great rock-face in the wood high above the mansion of nowadays, from which it is said that the modern

name of Arncliff is derived; for it was there, on the very summit, inaccessible then either from above or below, that the Erne or great White-tailed Eagle built its nest, as is of course well known. But to those who are better informed, it would seem that it was another Erne from which the rock took its name, and which marked it out by its terrible presence.

It is true that the summit may be easily reached now, and that a nest placed there would not be safe from the climbing prowess of even not very advanced schoolboys. But it was different then. The elements, working quietly but forcibly through many ages and many centuries, have worn down and degraded the once lofty pinnacle, and the earth of the bank has slipped and made a great steep talus or slope at the bottom, taking off yards and yards of its apparent height; but it was different indeed in the day of Bergulf the Reckless. Even he, in his wildest fits of daring, in his maddest exposure of life and limb and being, would never have dreamed of scaling its inaccessible heights. On this towering summit it was that the monstrous Erne, from King Arthur's mysterious underground place of repose, took up its stated abiding-place; Bergulf's own abode being where, later, in our more recent and tamer times, the stronger and statelier home of the Engelram and Colville reared its massive strength.

Not far away, either, was the hill that first got

to be called the Worm Hill, and to this day is called the Whorle Hill ; and it got the former name because the loathly Worm from the King's Standard took his abode near it, and sallied forth from it, as his accustomed haunt, to work the murdering scathe and hurt that made the countryside a byword for the pity and the ruth of it.

It was but too true that, but for there being limits to his cruel lust for human blood, the entire neighbourhood must have been depopled. For it could not have been endured that all the young maidens of the country round should become in succession the prey of the monster. For that was what befell after Bergulf returned from his perilous adventure—only, not every day or every night. I have already said that it was not always or often that the secrets of the great hill, afterwards called Freeburgh, were disclosed, or that the most foresighted and farsighted of mortals could penetrate to a perception of the marvels it brooded over, but only on mystic and stated nights. It was on these same nights, and these nights only, that the Erne and the Worm went forth on their dree and fatal quests. But as surely as the nights came round, some cottage-home or some less lowly bower missed one of its fairest, most loved and cherished inmates, or some sturdy worker or stalwart man-at-arms returned no more to hut or hold.

Long before Bergulf's race was run, and the

thread of his life disparted, but not long before his hair had become white and his face haggard and furrowed, as if worn night and day with grief and trouble and pain, there was not a maiden of seventeen, unless she were as loathly as the Worm itself, left in all the adjacent townships; and there was danger lest the fields might go untilled, and the strongholds be left bare of defenders, by reason of the ravages of the Erne and the Worm. Bergulf himself was never again seen to be of a cheerful countenance, his name was changed from 'The Reckless' to 'The Cheerless,' and he became, though not a 'wolf of the rock,' as his name implied, yet a dweller in the rock; for he betook himself to the shelter of a lonesome cavern, no great way from where the Priory of Mount Grace afterwards stood. Had it been called by a name then, it might have rather been Mount of Dread than Mount of Grace.

Here, with the wolf howling round his den—for it was more den than cell—but leaving him always unharmed, he drew out a lengthened and shuddering existence, ever dreading the recurrence of the mystic nights, when the fell companions of his return from his fatal adventure would go forth again on their awful raids.

He passed away at last: but the curse he had brought upon the country did not pass away with him. In one respect it might even be said to have been aggravated. Hitherto, the Hall of the Lord had

been exempted from payment of the relentless tribute to the rapacity of the Worm, and the Erne had spared the scions of the old knightly stock. But it was soon seen that it was to be so no longer. One sad night, the night of the Needfire, after all had been duly done for averting plague and pestilence and calamity, and for ensuring fertility and fair ripening seasons, Amyas, son of Sir Uverie of the Dale, lord of the land, came riding home from the festal lighting of the fires, with his half-score of sturdy yeomen behind him, while his sister, sweet and lovely and fair as the day, was at the entrance to the defences of the hall to welcome his return, when, with a rush like that of the breaking of a tempest, the Worm swept in among the throng, beat down the men on either side, whelmed both steed and rider to the earth, crushed the horse with one folding of his coils, and carried off the body of the horseman to its haunt at the Hill. The same moment the swoop of the Erne was heard, and the hapless maiden was seized and borne away to the unapproachable summit of the Ernecliff.

And this was but the first of such woes. After this, none but the noblest and the fairest were taken when the fateful day and hour came round ; and there was not a hall nor a tower for miles around that had not to mourn a son or a daughter reft away and slain in such wise. Knight after knight came to the rescue, as it was hoped : but neither

bravery, nor wisdom and craft, seemed able to strive successfully with the might of the destroyers.

One daughter yet was left at the Hall below the foot of the cliff, fair and fearless. Fain would those that loved her have had her tarry always within her bower, trebly guarded with planks of oak and bars of iron. She held that no harm could befall her, except it were on the night of the bale-fire, or its eve ; and she persisted in visiting the holy hermit, who now lived where the remorseful silent recluse, once called Reckless, had lived and died. By his advice and counsel she framed her life and guided her steps. The young baron of the battlemented castle near the foot of the great Round Hill (now called the Whorle Hill, as we remember), resorted also to the cell of the hermit of the Mount of Dread, standing in the same peril as that which menaced the maiden of the Hall below the Cliff. Twice already had the malice of the monster been defeated through the foresight and devices of the hermit ; but it could not be hoped that wily stratagem and wisely arranged plans would stand in good stead for always against such foes ; the more especially as it became evident that disappointment had not lessened the Worm's eagerness for his prey. For the great hill already mentioned was now to get its distinctive name of Whorle Hill, because the creature wreathed itself three times round the upper part of it, as if to have better means of surveyal of the castle and its in-

mates. People even say that traces of its loathsome embrace remain to this very day. The Erne itself, moreover, baffled at home, and finding the dearth of maidens occasioned by his previous ravages, had taken to the seizure of men-at-arms. Twice had a warder been taken from the battlements of the castle—for, of course, they were on duty through the fatal nights, as at other times.

The baron was sore grieved, and wroth as well as grieved. But ruth and anger seemed equally in vain. Besides, on his journeys to and from the hermit's, he had seen the maiden of the Hall, and he had learned something besides sympathy, and a longing to be able to defend one so lovely, so gentle, and yet so hopeful and fearless; and he swore a deep oath that he would avenge his retainers and deliver the lady, and win her for his own if he might, by one and the same act of devotion. By some device, or by some deed of daring, he would quell both the Worm and the Erne, or die in the effort.

I cannot tell you of half the counsels that were taken, or the plans and devices that were proposed, and cast aside as profitless and vain almost as soon as suggested. I cannot tell you of the meetings, at the hermit's or at the Hall, of the baron and the maiden, nor yet how the attachment that grew up between them became deeper and more ardent. Only, every time they met, the more resolute be-

came the baron that she should be delivered, at whatever cost or peril, even in the very jaws of death itself. But I can tell you that a week before the next dread night of danger came, plans had been laid and measures taken, ready to try an issue with those two baleful enemies.

Two days before the night of fate, baron and knight, each with a trusted squire, began to assemble at the Castle from all the country-side. Smiths in iron and of timber were busy on the towers and ramparts, as if in preparation for a siege. Armourers were busy in their vaulted forges ; and cunningly-devised coats of mail were being wrought with hammer and file, anvil and glowing hearth. Meanwhile the Worm lay coiled in his whorls around the hill, as if carven in stone, poisoning and blasting every living herb and shrub and tree with his slow fiery breath ; and the Erne, with drooping wings, and bare head and neck sunk in between his projecting pinion-joints and back, sat as seemingly lifeless as if it had been a part of the rock which furnished its resting-place.

At last the eventful day dawned, and drew its slow length along ; and now it was drawing to its close. The shades of evening began to spread as the sun's last rays were lost in the gold and crimson west, and earlier than usual the wonted fires were piled, and the mystic spark (obtained only by friction of wood against wood) was applied. For

neither Erne nor Worm could thole such fire—even if all fire had not been an abomination to them—and the votaries knew that they themselves were safe as long as the blaze was well fed and maintained. So the fires on the jutting heights on either side of the Nick in the Scar, and again lower (or more to the eastward), along the same range, the great fires were three times as large as usual, and blazed and crackled and sparkled with a brightness such as had not been seen before as long as men remembered.

As the hour drew on, the Worm was seen—for the fires were now at their brightest—to move, to raise his head. The glare of the fires was even seen to flash back from his monstrous eyes. He slowly unrolled himself and began to descend the hill. There could be no doubt which way he was directing his course. The battlements of the castle had scores of men on them; and a single warder only would have been enough to attract him. As he drew near the stronghold, a strange sight presented itself. A horse, as large as that with which Troy was won, advanced over the lowered drawbridge, and a knight in full armour by its side, as if about to mount. In truth, it was the Baron himself. For he would suffer no one else to take the place of peril; and the issue of the stratagem to be tried was but a doubtful one after all. But he was there, and the fearless maiden was on the ramparts to see the

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deed of daring, and to pray as well as hope for its success.

When the Worm caught sight of the steed and scented the man, he rolled himself forward with quickened pace. At the same moment the horse was seen to advance with accelerated motion, as if to meet the monster in mid career, while the knight slowly retired to the barbican. In a moment the Worm, as was always his wont, threw his coils round the horse, seeking to destroy it and so to make for the man. But with a roaring hiss, such as mortal ears had never listened to before, he uncoiled his deadly clasp in an instant, and for the space of a thought recoiled. For the horse was of wood, and set all over with long spikes of steel, tempered and sharp as human wit and skill could render them. True, it was known that no weapon of mortal forging could pierce his scales: yet it was hoped that some among those many pike-points might penetrate between his rings, and perhaps even give a fatal wound.

But no. Recoiling but for a flash, he whirled himself on and threw himself against the castle walls as if he would break them down with the sheer impulse of his weight. But this too had been foreseen, and as he reared his loathly head, with gleaming eye and brandishing tongue, against the battlements where they were lowest, a sudden outburst of flame from a bundle of loose hemp steeped in inflammable

oils and powdered over with rosin, blazed into his very jaws and eyes, and he fell discomfited back. This was the Baron's chance. He had retired only to bide his time, as he hoped, and as the fearful monster fell to the earth he rushed forth from his shelter, and with a lance having twice the usual length of steel for its head, sought to give a deadly wound in its undefended under parts. He drove the spear in far over its head, but little recked the brute of that. Only it was for the moment blinded and dazed: and well it was for the adventurous Baron that he too was in armour set with spikes like those on the horse.

For the Worm missed his first clutch and felt the spikes before he could recover himself for a second. Repeating the same awful roaring hiss, he turned and fled. And but for the foolhardiness of the burly lord of Crumbeclive, all might have gone well, for this time at least.

For the Erne too had been baffled in his first rushing swoop.

He had taken his flight just when the Dragon had first stirred, and sighting the fearless maiden, in a moment had stooped to seize her. But fell as it was, the swoop was vainly made. For all above the fighters' banquette had been spread a cunningly-devised framework of strong iron bars, welded together in the fashion of a net: and the dread swoop of the giant fowl spent itself against this.

The shock made everything tremble, and every heart stood still for a moment. The Erne itself lay stunned, and the lord of Crumbeclive thrust at it with his lance. With a scream even more horrible, because more piercing than the strange hiss of the Worm, the fearsome fowl reared itself, spread its wings, and flew heavily and slowly away. It was at the very moment when the blaze which had repelled the rearing onset of the Worm gave its last brilliant but expiring flash, and the reptile was seen in undisguised retreat. Confident of victory, and in spite of the warning of the lord of the Hall, the burly lord of Crumbeclive sallied forth from the network of defence, and mounting the steps to a turret, gave out a mighty shout of triumph. But unhappily it was premature. The Erne was back upon him in the moving of an eyelid, and the next moment was bearing him heavily away towards the Ernecliff. But once there, claw and beak were alike impotent. The strong man's sword had been dashed from his hand at the instant of seizure ; his long dagger had dropped from its sheath during his passage through the air ; and the warrior was helpless, even if he had been in better guise for fighting. Both man and fowl were for a moment without resource. But the matter was not long in suspense. The huge winged captor took its victim in its talons, and soaring high above the summit of the cliff dropped him on the rocky platform at the base, where he was found, his armour

of proof sorely battered and crushed, but his lifeless body untouched : unlike those of the warders who had been seized before, and whose half-armour had not saved them from being torn in pieces.

Great was the consulting and the deliberation which took place the next day. It was but too apparent still, that though schemes of defence might prove to be efficient for the time, yet ultimate deliverance from these awful scourges of the whole countryside was, to all appearance, as far off as ever. But deliverance there must be, or the country must be deserted and left desolate. And even then, as some one remarked, the destroying pests might remove too, and renew their desolating work elsewhere. There was, however, another voice heard in the council this morning, which had not hitherto been heard there at all, and that was the voice of the Baron of Danby, the same who had been charged by the King to lay the sword of knighthood on the equally valiant and puissant Giant-crusher. For he was there among the rest of the chivalry of the countryside, and with him had come the Thane of Westerdale. ‘If any one can come to the rescue,’ said the one, ‘it will be Sir Jack the Giant-crusher and Wolf-queller.’ ‘Yes,’ echoed the other, ‘if any mortal can help you in this strife with dragons and ernes, it is Sir Jack, who delivered Westerdale from the harrying of the wolves.’ And then was set forth the story of Jack and the Giant Grim, and how he

had obtained the honour of knighthood ; the Westerdale thane enlarging on the great exploit by which the army of wolves, with the great arch-wolf at their head, had been utterly routed and extirpated.

Well, the resolution that was finally adopted was, that the Baron of the Castle and the father of the maiden at the Hall, taking with them the holy hermit of the Mount of Dread, should journey back with the Baron of Danby and the Thane of Westerdale and ask the succour of the redoubtable Sir Jack. There was yet another too, who, after much and urgent entreaty, was added to the deputation. And this was none other than the brave maiden herself. She pleaded that she so much wished to see and know Sir Jack's bonny little lady, and to hear from her own lips the story of her peril and her deliverance ; and I daresay she thought too that she could do something in the way of persuasion, if it should chance—what the Danby Baron thought the most unlikely thing in the world—that persuasion proved to be necessary.

Well, the journey was undertaken and the cavalcade set forth. Much forest-ground was traversed, and then tracts of swamp and fen. On the hills towering up on their right hand were pines and oaks and hollies, giants of their kind. Lower and about the slacks were alders and saughs or sallows. It was hardly a road, little more than a track, they pursued, and many were the difficulties to be sur-

mounted. It was dusk before they reached their quarters for the night, namely, the stronghold of the Baron of the great stretching dale of the Esk and of Danby. But there they were made royally welcome.

When the morning was come the envoys proceeded with all possible circumstance and state to Castle Rouge, as Sir Jack had called the mansion which had been built for him; in compliment to his lady's known preference for the colour. All there was in perfect order and pleasant consistency. Small ponies in the stables and parks, small dogs in the kennel and courts, a small Seneschal and small varlets to attend. There was no delay in admitting the visitors, for Sir Jack lived in fear of none, and was held in great esteem by all for miles around.

Sir Jack received the party with all grave ceremony and observance, and it was not long before they opened their business. But Sir Jack had heard but a few words of it before he sent two small pages to crave the attendance of the Little Lady Red (as she was always called for short) to welcome the maiden, and assist the conference with her counsel as well as grace it with her presence.

For Sir Jack never took upon him any grave quest or undertaking without first consulting his canny little spouse. And good reason he had for the same, as you will presently hear.

The Little Lady came, gracious and graceful,

tender and sweet, as ever in any little innocent child-like imaginings she can be, and with gentle lovingness, when she saw the beautiful maiden, she kissed her on both cheeks and bade her welcome. And then when all were seated in due state and order, the reasons of the coming were duly and fully set forth. Sir Jack listened with deep intentness. The Little Lady whispered to the maiden, ‘Poor darling!’ and kissed her again. And when they told of the scenes of the night before, and of the brave attempt of the Baron of the Castle below the whorled Hill, she smiled up in his face, and it was seen that a tear twinkled in her eye, a tear of sympathy and approbation.

When all had been told, and all needful questions asked and answered, Sir Jack gravely said that he thought the adventure was one which might be worthily undertaken, but that it would need much thought and shaping; and that, after consultation with the Lady Red, he would tell them what seemed best and most fitting for the enterprise. But mainly he asked when the next awaking of the Worm and the Erne might be looked for, ‘Because,’ said he, ‘it would be ill to be unprepared by then. What think you, my Lady Red?’

‘It is a fair adventure for my valiant Lord,’ she made answer, in a sweet low voice, holding the maiden’s hand in hers; ‘and we will take counsel ere the shades of night be upon us.’

After that, all hospitality was shown ; and, the banquet over, the wonderful things and precious things and strange things Sir Jack had won in his conquest of the Giant were shown ; and the visitors were told how it was found that he had other hoards besides pearls and jewels and golden harps, and all the other things usually found in giants' treasure chambers. But there was one part of the mansion into which no stranger was ever admitted, although in it was kept the most wonderful, and the most precious by far, of all the possessions owned by Sir Jack ; and that was the specially built turret set apart for the safeguarding of the Staff with its mysterious eye. Sir Jack himself went thither from time to time, and always in time of perplexity, or trouble, or doubt and difficulty. But it was the Little Lady Red who was the constant visitor and the constant caretaker ; and no day passed without the spending by her of gentle housewifely pains over the Staff itself and all that surrounded it. And from this there had sprung a strange circumstance.

We know how Sir Jack had been accustomed to hold a sort of intercourse with the intelligence which animated the Eye, and that the way of it had been slow and often perplexing, not to say difficult, and at first sight hardly intelligible. But with the Little Lady Red it had become quite a different thing. There soon grew to be such a great sympathy between the mortal and the fay, when once the former had

begun, and went on to continue, her loving tendance, that there seemed to be actual communication passing from the one to the other. And now for long nothing important was undertaken, and nothing undertaken carried out, without counsel sought and obtained from the Fairy Princess installed in the Eye.

Of course this visit and the occasion of it could not but lead to a great consultation. The issue of it, however, was such that the visitors went away not without sensible heartening and encouragement.

All the same the Little Lady's visits to the special turret continued to be frequent and prolonged, and her sweet little face seemed to be more serious and more thoughtful than usual, as if she foresaw that the new adventure would be perilous as well as difficult. And indeed it was so; for it came to be understood by herself and her valiant lord that the Worm could not be slain by weapon forged by mortal hands, and that the Eldritch Erne could only be mastered in its own element, or high above the earth; and that, even so, neither fiend, nor fay, nor Christen man only, could deal the mortal blow.

Sir Jack, however, did not seem to be so troubled over this strange mysterious sentence as his loving little spouse was. ‘Hearten up, my sweet,’ he said; ‘I think I know what that means. It is the other matter, the prevailing over the Gruesome Worm, which perplexes me. I can't see my way there. I destroyed the wolves, or at least I got the credit of it; but it

was not me a bit that did it, except, perhaps, in the way of planning it out a little. And I did the same for old Grim, but I didn't use any smith-forged weapon against him. I had nothing more dangerous to an enemy than my dear old pocket-knife. Cheer up, my bonny one! we'll manage it all right.' And then, as his way was, he went into the familiar deep old glen, taking the dear and precious Staff with him, and Little Lady Red did not see any more of him or his companion until an hour after sunset.

But when he came home and saw how anxious his little wife looked, he kissed her bonny face and told her to be of good cheer. He had fashioned a plan, and he was sure it would do, and she might take the Staff and play any game with it, except 'crooked questions and cross answers,' for the Staff certainly would have none of that. And I think it wasn't that game that was played at all; for the little woman who had gone away so anxious came back very cheerful, and the least little bit saucy.

Well, the week of the Solstice drew on, and then it was only too well known by experience that the fell pests of the district would but too surely waken to their old and accustomed orgies. Sir Jack and his lady took their departure to what might very well have been called 'Castle Dangerous.' The first thing he did on arriving was to view the Worm in all his flaysome aspect and dimensions; and he took knowledge of the Erne and his 'Siege Perilous';

and after the survey, and perfecting his intelligence on the very scene of all that he had heard tell about by word of mouth, he entered into deep consultation with the Baron and chief armourer. It was noticed he never left his Staff for long together, and that the Little Lady was often in conference with him, and that she was more careful than ever in her heedful service about the strange-looking object in the head of the Staff.

The very last evening before the expected adventure, after much previous deliberation, Sir Jack was seen by the Little Lady and the maiden to leave the Castle at nightfall by the postern, crossing the moat by the concealed causeway, and as soon as he was out of sight of all but these two, to rise upon his Staff as he had done at the quelling of the wolves, and to go speeding away into the distance. The fact was that the Fairy Princess who animated the eye wanted the aid of two elf-maidens—beings whose character it is to assume the human form in order to delude the unwary mortal—and Sir Jack and the Staff had gone off on this quest. Well, about midnight Sir Jack found himself not far from the place now called Glaisdale Swangs, which even much less than a hundred years ago had still an uncanny reputation, because it was said to be the special haunt of misleading beings whose practice and joy it was to waylay any benighted persons, and to lead them through bog and thicket and tangle, and not

leave them till the dawn came to dispel the illusion and show the weary, belantered and bemired wayfarers the road that led to their homes. And all there was to be seen more than usual that night, as Jack loped along on his way home—just stopping for a minute or two for the exchange of intelligence as he and his bearer passed the now repeopled Fairy Cross Plains—was a lambent pale-blue touch of flame on the very top of the Staff, which indeed was by itself sufficient to show that Sir Jack had compassed the object of his expedition.

Well, the night came, and with it rose a brilliant moon. But Jack had not trusted only to the lantern of the skies. He had directed that fires equally brilliant with those of the Needfire night should be alight in readiness for the critical time. He, too, was ready for action, and everything prepared within and without. The iron network was spread as before, and the fiery means for repelling the Worm, if need were ; though Sir Jack assured the maiden there would be little fear of that. The barons and lords and thanes were there, and their brave yeomen. They were armed, moreover, but not with spear and glaive and bow and javelin. Their weapons were gavelock and pick and spade, and there was means of carriage without enough to keep a gang of brawny navvies fully at work with filling and emptying.

Still, there was one thing which occupied Sir Jack's thoughts a little. He had two conflicts to

engage in, and he did not want them both on his hands at one and the same time, if policy could forestall such a chance, for when the Worm wakened the Erne wakened too.

Sir Jack had, however, taken counsel about this with his canny and knowful counsellor. Yet even its prescience was a little at fault here. All the same, ‘experience must be tried,’ and there was good hope that the projected device might prove altogether successful. So, ten minutes before the exact fateful hour, Sir Jack sallied forth from the Castle, equipped only with his Staff, and in three bounds was close to the inert monster’s head, but in the rear (or away from the Castle) not in front, because of its fearful blasting breath. In a moment the hero, looking tinier than ever by the side of that huge bulk, was on his feet, with his Staff held lance-wise, and making a deadly lunge at the hideous creature’s eye. The next moment saw him fifty yards away, but not a second too soon. For the thrust in the eye had wakened the dreadful creature and its wrath as well. It did not so much uncoil its rings as flash out like lightning from its lair! But Sir Jack was out of its reach, and besides that in the full glare of the fires, so that the baffled monster turned from the pursuit and irefully began its course towards the Castle. But the hill was, of course, in its direct way, and just as its monstrous head was moving to one side to avoid the obstruction, the figure of a maiden with

her mantle over her head, attended by another at a little distance behind, was seen right in its direct path, and the Baron on the lofty battlements looked in affright to where his own beloved one had stood but a few moments before. She was not there. He was rushing off like a madman to try and get to the rescue, when he heard her lightsome laugh as she stooped to lift the little Lady Red so that she might have a better view of what was happening.

And truly it was a sight to see. The Worm launched himself in fell pursuit the moment his eye glanced on those fleeing figures. The same instant the great Whorle Hill was seen to be elevated on glowing pillars, like the Freeburgh Hill on King Arthur's mystic nights, or the great Round Hill of Fryup on the nights when its former inhabitants held high festival and caroused together. As if blind to everything but the peril besetting them behind, straight forward sped the two figures in their headlong flight. The Worm rushed along with terrible speed. The figures reached the awful tunnel, the Worm not twenty yards behind them. They emerged on the Castle side, the Worm not five yards behind. But there is one already standing close by, with the bright light of flame and moon glancing on his equipments and his long lance-like staff with singular brilliancy. It is none other than the famous Giant-crusher, now about to outdo that former and greatly famed achievement.

As the loathly head of the Worm just showed itself, and would have issued into the open had the space of but a second been allowed, Sir Jack with the point of his Staff smote one of the fire-seeming pillars of support, and down, down sank the whole immense body of the hill upon the Worm beneath, with such strange suddenness that the eyes gazing on the scene were, for a moment, bewildered with the startling incidence of the event.

'Hurrah, hurrah! The Worm is slain,' burst forth in joyous shouts from the Castle; and it needed all the authority of the Baron and the lords, his friends and allies, to restrain the men—ay, and the women too—from rushing out to see the completeness of the triumph achieved.

But there was still another adventure to be attempted, and scarcely less hardy than the one which had just been happily accomplished. And in two bounds and a leap the hero of the first was on the leads of the Castle, and making himself ready for the second. And not a moment too soon. For hardly had he passed out of sight through the door leading to the turret, from the summit of which the luckless lord of Crumbeclive had been snatched on that last awful occasion, when the rush of the mighty wings of the Erne was heard, and directly it was seen hovering over the battlements and roofs of the Castle, as if remembering its former discomfiture, and reluctantly hesitating about the swoop. The

Little Lady Red shrieked outright, and even the brave maiden blenched a little. While the Erne still seemed to be hovering in suspense, the little door of the turret on to the leads opened, and the figure of a man in full armour, just as if the burly lord had reappeared, rose up and stood where that same lord had stood then. There was no suspense any longer. The awful wings were closed, the swoop was made, and the warrior form seized and borne aloft with an exulting scream from the ruthless reiver. Up he went in his triumph, and, as if with intention, hovered for a space, much in the fashion of a windhover hawk, right over the Castle. He even seemed to hesitate—at least so the terror-stricken onlookers fancied—about dropping his burden straight down on the leads below. But it was not so really, though an upward and soaring flight was seen to have begun. For he had not, after all, got a living knight this time, in the sense in which he had seized one that time before; though he had ‘a living knight’ in his clutches it is true.

But the knight now was not a burly knight like the first, however much he might be a knight of valiancy and prowess. For the knight he had carried off, though without actually clutching him, was none other than the Giant-crusher. The harness of the seeming knight seized had been craftily imagined and cunningly fashioned, so as to enclose Sir Jack safely within, but still so that he had the power of issuing

forth when the right time came, and working out the full scheme he had, with the aid of the Eye, previously devised ; and that was to come forth as soon as the robber fowl had begun its steady flight, armed with his Staff, sharp as we know it was, and reduced within marvellous short dimensions for the nonce, and, making his way up the creature's legs and through the thick feathers of its thighs, to reach its back, and thence deal the fatal stroke, leaving the empty harness to be dropped at will.

It was all successfully done as he had planned it. Just as the bird was seen to commence its soaring flight, the daring little hero was preparing to deliver the crowning blow. The staff had elongated itself as marvellously as it had contracted its length before, and with the same sort of strange energy as in the fight with the wolves, as Sir Jack bent with the effort to thrust the creature through the body below the wings, a mighty power was lent to the effort, and the dread being was stricken through and through, the projecting ends of the staff serving to prevent the wings from collapsing and closing until the fall had begun. Then the air beneath held them still erect, and the lifeless body was seen falling, still falling,<sup>1</sup> with a slow rotating motion, until

<sup>1</sup> This is neither fancy nor imagination, as far as the fact of rotatory motion under the circumstances supposed is concerned. The writer once shot a woodcock high on the moorbank on the west side of Danby Dale, and from such a position that the bird had to fall from twenty to thirty yards before reaching the ground. From the moment

it reached the ground near the walls of the Castle on the hill-foot side.

Then a tumultuous body of knights and barons and yeomen rushed out of the fortress to acclaim the hero of the day, and complete the victories he had won. For now the use of the homely equipment of spade and mattock and bar was recognised. The Erne had to be buried, or a pestilence might have ensued ; and parts of the Worm protruded from beneath the cover of the overlying hill. But long before the light of the fires had died down, and with the moon still shining gloriously in the sky, rocks and earth and turf had been heaped thickly on the still writhing tail of the Worm, and his hideous muzzle had been hidden by a whelming mass shot down from the hill above ; and, besides that, the ghastly carcase of the Erne had been thrust into the pit hollowed out for it. And so, any one now can easily see what is the true explanation of the ridgy protuberances at the foot of the Whorle Hill when all this is borne in mind, as well as of some of the perplexing embankments in the slack between the Castle and the hill.

[I hardly need lengthen out my story by telling you in what honour, after this, Sir Jack was held, nor

the shot struck it and the fall commenced, the two wings stood up as here described, and with slow rotatory motion the dead bird reached the surface of the ground without any of the usual accompaniments of the fall of a bird of some weight shot dead on the instant. It gracefully subsided rather than fell.

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yet of the banqueting in hall and merry-makings in cottage and vill, which took place in consequence; but I think that if he could have gone in his modest bravery where Bergulf in his redeless recklessness penetrated that fateful night, the mighty king would have deigned to assign him a place at the mystic Round Table, and held that his clean heart and hands, as well as his knightly prowess, would well qualify him to come forth as a hero in that mighty conflict he and his knights sit there to await. And I will only tell you more, that a pair of very red lips kissed Sir Jack, and that neither the Baron nor the Little Lady Red seemed the least bit jealous.]



## HOW SIR JACK OVERCAME THE CHURCH- GRIM GOAT OF GOATHLAND.

EVERYBODY I have ever talked to in these parts has heard of the Killing Pits at Goathland which are to be found there, not such a very long way from the Church, out on the moor-side. And many people say, and it has often been printed, that the name was given because of a great battle once fought there in the old, old times, ever so long ago. Only nobody that I have ever talked to about it has told me how the pits and the battle fitted in together. For if the pits were dug on purpose to bury the bodies of the slain, the wonder is they were left open, and remain open to this day.

Other people say they were dug to serve as cooking-pits, or for people to make big fires in and heat big stones to help to boil the old-fashioned pots then in use.

Others, though only one or two at present as far as I know, say they think they were dug on purpose to get at some ironstone which is known to be lying beneath the surface there, and not too deep to be got at by the help of just such round holes as these pits seem to be ; and that the real name is not Killing Pits at all, but Kiln-pits, which the people of the country round have a way of calling ‘killin pits,’ and that ‘kiln’ really means the low old-fashioned furnace the miners used a few hundred years ago for getting the iron out of the stone.

Of course, all these different notions cannot be, every one of them, right. And anyway, if only one of them be right, the other two are wrong. But suppose all three of them are wrong, and that there was no battle fought in which the soldiers killed one another, and the bodies of the slain had to be buried ; or again, that such a quantity of cooking-pits as there is there would have required more diggers than cooks, and that all the country-side round could not have supplied the eaters for such a ‘furnishing forth’ of food as that ; while besides, the ironstone notion is at present only a sort of a ghost of a guess after all ; and over and above all the rest, suppose that the people who listen to these old stories of mine were to ask me, ‘But don’t you know more about these pits, and how they came to be there, and the reason why, so as to be able to give a more likely account of them than any such notion as either of those

mentioned conveys?—what do you think the answer might possibly be?

Well, certainly, if I had to answer such a question, what I should wish to say would be that the story I am able to tell about them is not only one which came out of the same store as those others which made me acquainted with the history of the strange exploits of Sir Jack the Giant-crusher, and how he destroyed the Westerdale wolves, and made an end of the terrible Worm of the Whorle Hill, and the Eldritch Erne of Arncliff, but one which is just as authentic as any of those others; while, besides, it gives quite a different account of the Killing Pits. In fact, the story I am now going to tell you will show how little the folks who framed those three explanations I have named really knew concerning the subject they were so ready to talk about.

But I must begin with a sort of an explanation myself. Once upon a time there used to be a very gruesome kind of being which had a number of different names according to the very many different places in which it was seen or heard, sometimes both seen *and* heard, and sometimes even felt as well as seen or heard. I have heard it called ‘Padfoot,’ because of the strange muffled sound of its feet when it met or passed people in the dusk of the evening, or later still in the night. Others used to call it the ‘Scriker,’ because of the awful scrikes (shrieks) it uttered when out abroad on its terrible

errand of death-warning ; for somebody was sure to die soon after it had been seen or heard. Then another name was called and spelt 'Gytrash,' in which the ending 'trash' surely means goblin or ghostly being. And yet another name for it is 'Church-grim,' or 'Kirk-grim,' where 'grim' means ghostly apparition ; and this name I have only heard from one or two old folks. But the most common name, at least in our part of the world, is 'Barguest,' or 'Bargetst,' where the first syllable stands for *bier*, the frame on which the dead body in its coffin is carried to the grave, and 'gest' is another word for ghost.

Such a lot of names, of course, means that the creature, or being, or apparition, called by one or the other of them, used to be frequently met with, and in many and widely distant places. All over Yorkshire I have heard of him, and in Scotland, and across the sea in many different parts of Denmark and Sweden, where Kirkegrim, or in the last-named country, Kirkjugrim, is the usual or accustomed name.

But to come nearer home than that, there used to be one at or near Egton Church, many a grisly story about which I have heard in the old days ; and there used to be another at Danby, often met on the old Church road ; and many others in other places, even cities or big towns, such as York and Newcastle, both of which used to have such flaysome, ghostlike beings at home in them.

The one at Egton used to appear in the form of a great hairy donkey (or ‘jackass,’ as the man who saw it last was used to call it); and the one at Danby looked like a big rough dog, with long shaggy hair. But they all had huge glaring eyes as big as saucers, and gleaming with a sort of fearful, threatening blaze. And they all moved with that horrid flapping sort of footfall I mentioned; and sometimes, if they met you on a narrow footpath where there was only room for one to walk, in a moment, without your knowing how it happened, they were behind you without your being touched, or feeling or seeing them pass. But if you offered to touch them, or attempted to strike them, they flung you yards away in a trice, and when they left you, or you could not see them any longer, they used to give out that unearthly and horrible yelling scrike. I don’t know how many of them, first and last, and with what frightening details, I must have heard of at different times.

And next, I will tell you the cruel shocking sort of story I have many times heard and read about the origin or beginning of them, and how they came to have such a frightful look, and such a frightful sort of business to discharge as well. For surely it is a frightful business to have to go out and signify to people that they are going to die. And the story I mean is like this. In the old, old days, when people were going to build a great

strong tower or castle, or a mighty wall to a town, or one of those old first churches that were built in a place, they used sometimes to mix the mortar that was to be used in laying the first stone with blood. And the blood was got by slaying the first living creature that met the masons and their master in the morning when they were just on the way to go and begin the work. But sometimes, instead of killing the poor hapless creature outright, and so getting and using its blood that way, they made a hollow place, or sort of a chamber, in the new wall, big enough to hold it, and then they put it in and built it up alive, to die by slow degrees of hunger, cold, and suffocation. Nay, it is not so very long since I was reading of a powerful baron (in some part of Germany, I think it was) who, with his men, was just going to begin building his solid-walled castle, and he met his own young daughter, still quite a girl ; and how, though it broke his heart to have to do it, and notwithstanding all her cries and tears and entreaties, he gave the order, and saw her actually walled-in !

Well, but this killing or building-in was not the end of the matter. The creature, whether human or a beast of the field, that was so walled-up or put to death, always haunted the building concerned for ever afterwards, whatever it was, castle or church, but more especially if it happened to be a church. And in that case, it was regularly to be seen, or

most likely seen and heard too, just when somebody belonging to the building was doomed to die—some inmate of the castle, if it was a castle, or some one among the people of the parish, if it was a church. I got a letter one day about twenty years ago, and the old gentleman who sent it asked, ‘What is this creature or apparition that is called a church-grim, and which haunts the church-tower, and comes forth and marauds about in the parish when one of the folk that live in it is going to die, and which has great glaring eyes?’ and all the rest of the grisly description. And he printed what I told him in a book he wrote about the way the people used to talk at Whitby, and still do, a great many of them. And it was he who told me a deal about the Barghest, or Church-grim, at Egton, one story being about a young man who was much too brave—foolhardy, I think it was—by reason of the beer he had been drinking, and who met the phantom-being at the wicket-gate leading into the churchyard, which he was going to cross, and was stopped by the horrid-looking object every time he tried to get in. But still he would persist in trying to pass, and every time the Barghest hindered him and thrust him back. At last, in his drunken cunning, he thought he would trick the creature; and so, pretending to go away, he just went far enough to get into another path that led into the track or road up to and past the main entrance to the churchyard. And thus

he got into the graveyard. But he never came out of it alive ; for he fell into a new-made grave, and lost his life by the fall. And so it was seen that the Barget had foreshown him his own death.

Well, after all this introduction, I think I can now go on to tell my story of the gruesome Church-grim Goat of Goathland, of which I think I may say that, if anybody does, *I* certainly do, know the real authentic story.

I daresay you know, by near, where Goathland is, and that the railway from Whitby to Pickering passes through it, and what a wild, lonesome, dreary-looking country much of it is, with great bogs and big, craggy, steep moor-banks and hills about ; and I am sure you all remember dear old Dr. Young's story about Giant Wade and his wife Bell, who, when they were building Pickering Castle and Mulgrave Castle, both at the same time, tossed the one hammer they had between them backwards and forwards, according as he or she had occasion for its use. And no doubt, also, you remember how they made that wonderful massive old road that some people call the Roman Road, but all the old folks used to call Giant Wade's Causeway. Well, this said Causeway runs quite close—I have seen it myself, and heard the workmen who were trying to hack it through, in order to prepare for laying the foundation of a new stable, use naughty words because they found it to be so tough and hard, and

because it blunted their tools and jarred their arms so—this Causeway, I say, runs quite close to where there used to be another great old castle, which was called St. Julian's, and when you are standing near its former situation, just on the other side of the Causeway but now named, there is a field called Kirk Field down to this present day ; which means that once upon a time a church or a chapel stood there. Besides which, as you remember, there was and is the old church in Goathland ; and what I have got to tell you about these places is very sad and very shocking.

In the old, old times, when they used to do as I told you they did with the first living creature met with the day a building was begun, and when the church and the castle too were just going to be started with, a dreadful mischance befell. The great party who were going to begin, or see the beginning of, the building, the lord or baron, the masons, and the men, as they were going in order to lay the first stones of the church, fell in with a large billy-goat. But the first living creature they met as they went to the place where the castle was to be built, was a very beautiful young girl—she was not twenty years old yet—the daughter of the head mason, and actually foster-sister to the Baron himself ; and, as she was an industrious spinner, she had her spindle in her hand. Now none of the barons who owned that castle, even in much later days, had a very

good reputation, either in the country-side or in the history of the period. They were described as being cruel, unscrupulous, greedy, and oppressive, almost all of them, if not all the family. And those who went before them, when this building work I am telling you about was planned out and begun, were as bad and worse. And so the Baron would not spare the girl, but would have her walled-up in a cavity left on purpose, big enough to take her in : and so she was built in alive, course by course, and stone by stone, in spite of all her pitiful entreaties, her weeping eyes, and terror-stricken looks ; and in spite too—a thing that was almost too brutal and savage to dwell on—of her poor father's agonised beseechings and frantic entreaties to be slain and buried in the wall instead of her. Nay, it was even said that the cruel heartless Baron actually himself, with the point of his sword, forced the poor man to do the most effectual part of the final building-in with his own hands !

Well, I hardly need tell you that no good came of this horrible cruelty and wickedness. The Baron himself came to a terrible end. The girl, as you will remember, had her spindle in her hand when she met the building party that miserable morning ; and it was said that the Baron was never thereafter for long together able to put away from himself the conviction that her semblance, or rather her apparition-self, and never without her spindle, was

close at hand, and might make her actual presence only too forcibly real and sensible, and both to sight and touch, at any moment. But besides this, it is a matter of entire certainty that whenever the month and the day of the cruel deed came round again, as the years rolled on, she was with him, go where he would, and he felt the thread she was constantly spinning weaving itself around him as the great field-spider twines his fatal thread round the fly in the web, and that every inch of it was poisoned with the germs of wasting sickness and miserable and active bodily decay. Indeed, it was but too well known that while she continually reminded him, not 'how long he had to live,' but how short his time was to be, he was made to know only too clearly and too well that, though his hands and feet and limbs, rotting off his body one by one, joint by joint, would make him long for death, the remembrance of his barbarous crime would but make him dread death with a continually increasing and most wretched, shuddering horror.

And so it came to pass. Three years of most wretched life in death, or almost rather death in the midst of life, were passed by him, and then, on the eve of the fatal day which was to be the last of his mortal life, came the Church-grim Goat. You will hardly be surprised, after what I have told you about him and the manner of his existence, that the Baron had never ventured to go to the church which had

the body of the goat enclosed in its foundations ; and besides, partly because he feared to go there, and partly with a sort of faint hope of being able to offer some expiation for his awful evil deeds, he had had the chapel built in the Kirk Field (as it is now called) near St. Julian's. But on this terrible night, when the Baron lay dying, the dread Goat, as huge as twenty ordinary goats, and black as darkness itself, threw down the enclosing wall, overthrew the turret in which the hallowed bell itself hung, and, tramping round and round the Castle with padding, dull-sounding steps that never ceased or slackened, gave forth its awful srike each time it came below the narrow window-slit which gave scanty light to the dying Baron's chamber.

The next day he died. One might almost say there died what was left of him, for what was laid in the hollowed-out stone coffin prepared for his burial was little but a limbless trunk ; and it was said that the last sound he uttered was a groaning shriek so awful that it had been better to hear the Grim Goat himself.

But we must take notice that up to the night before the baron's death, neither the Church-grim nor the phantom of the Spinster (as she soon came to be called) had been known to haunt the dwellings of those in the parish who were going to die, nor even to be seen by ordinary people in or near the churchyard ; or the Spinster more especially near

the moated Castle of St. Julian's. But it was not going to be so any longer. There was a sickly season following close on the burial of the Baron ; and while many of those who lived at the Castle felt the fatal threads of the Spinster twining round them, sometimes on one part of the body and sometimes on another, the cots of the villagers were visited from week to week, occasionally almost from day to day, and no one ever ventured near the church after dusk, because they never knew if they might not have to encounter the fateful Church-grim Goat of Goathland.

Better seasons, however, returned, and a healthier time came round, and the last to be consciously trammelled with the terrible thread had been the hapless maiden's father, and that was now some months ago ; while no apparition of the Goat had been seen for many months, and it was beginning to be hoped that something more than a respite had been given to the Goathland villagers.

But that was too soon found to be only a mistake. When the autumn was past, and the close of the year drew on, although there was no sickness in the country, no plague, no 'black death,' no tidings of noticeable mortality anywhere around, the Church-grim of Goathland began to 'maraud about,' as if in mere wantonness of slaying, rather than in the way of the office belonging to his being and nature. He seemed to have an evil lust for death, and night

after night his muffled footfalls or his appalling shriek forced themselves on the hearing, from the churchyard, in the very roadway through the vill, and even sometimes among the harbours and huts of the shepherds or foresters on the outskirts of the moors and woods. No one dared go out of doors after nightfall for fear of meeting the Grim. None dared in the short days of winter even go to church if there was any likelihood of being belated on his homeward way. There was a terrible panic throughout the country ; for whoever met the Grim died, whoever heard his pad-feet beside him sickened and lingered awhile, but entertained no hope of recovery. It was even worse for Goathland than in the time of the past sickness, and the people were at their wits' end for fear of what was actually upon them rather than only coming. The priests at the Church were without remedy ; the chaplain at the holy building near St. Julian's was always in dread of the renewal of the fatal spinning of the Spinster ; the hermits, holy men as they were, at the Hermitage, were of no avail ; and their advice to the workers in the fields and elsewhere, to keep as much within their dwellings after nightfall as they could, went but a little way to meet the great trouble.

Another thing, too, befell, which I must mention. The Castle was deserted : for the dwellers there, though they saw no sight, yet heard the spindle tapping the floors of the dark sounding passages ;

especially those on the side where the living tomb had been painfully built up ; week after week, some said night after night, and no one dared to bide there any longer and risk the fate that seemed to threaten the inmates.

But though they went elsewhere, they were not to escape so. The Spinster might not follow them, but they were not safe from the Goat. Wherever the men and maidens of the Castle went, there the Goat traced them out ; and a Goathland man or woman who had the chance, whether by flight or otherwise, of breaking the bond that bound them to the Goathland soil, found no deliverance, for they could not escape from his remorseless pursuit.

And even this was not the worst. If the fateful Goat followed a Goathland native to Eskdale or Lythe or Mulgrave—he could not go to Egton, for there was one of his sort there already, as we remember ; or to Pickering, for the like reason—the unfortunate people who chanced to fall in with him all found they had had the summons of death served upon them. The whole countryside was wild with apprehension and terror, and many a timid one died of the mere dread of dying.

Now this was the state of things in Goathland and the country places near no very long time after the parlous fight with, and victory over, the Worm of the Whorle Hill and the Erne of the Ernecliff.

As we all, no doubt, remember, news did not

travel so fast or so far in those days as it does now. But still, such exploits as those of Sir Jack the Giant-crusher and Wolf-queller were not likely to remain unheard of, or indeed uncelebrated, throughout all the wide district in different parts of which they had been accomplished. Indeed, on the contrary, they were put into songs and ballads, and the songs and ballads were chanted and sung by the travelling gleemen and minstrels who went strolling about all over the country ; and, before long, it came into the mind of some of the terror-struck people of Goathland and the neighbourhood that perhaps help—perhaps deliverance—even in such extremities, might be attainable, if not actually within their reach. I am not sure that the thought did not first come into the mind of one of the two hermits at the Hermitage of Goathland ; and I am by no means sure either that he had not heard something first of all from the Hermit of the Mount of Dread about the sad pass things had come to in that country before Sir Jack's aid had been originally asked and obtained. But, anyhow, I can tell you that a resolution was come to, at least to ask if the hero, who had managed to master two such terrific foes as the Worm and the Erne, could not suggest some way or means of deliverance from the terrible pursuit of the still more dreadful, because more of a phantom, being, that was worse than wasting the vill of Goathland and the places round about ; or

even, if that might prove possible, go to the rescue himself.

As it happened, there was no need this time to send a deputation to the abode of the famous champion, for he was on a visit to the Giant-built Castle of Mulgrave. But it was not a visit of courtesy only, or pleasure, or for the sake of the society of the Castellan there, or his visitors and people; or certainly not solely or even chiefly so. Indeed, he had gone on a very different piece of business, and at the very special solicitation of the Castellan himself. You see he had acquired great knowledge and experience about the ways of giants, and particularly as regards their little ways and tricks and manners in contriving and arranging secret treasure-chambers and crafty hiding-places for their precious things, and what they most especially valued.

Now, you will hardly want to be reminded who it was that built that famous old Castle I have just this minute named, nor yet the way in which the building was carried on. Giant Wade, as you bear in mind, was the master builder, and his wife Bell his helpmate. But he, this very Giant Wade, must, I think, have been a giant and a half—at least if nearly all I have heard about him is true; and if one may judge by his grave, which I myself have been to, and by the stones which used to stand ten yards apart, the one at the head and the other

at the foot of the same (which everybody said they did even as long ago as three hundred years since), he could have been no ordinary giant. Well, this giant it was who, with such help as his giantess helpmeet could give him, was the builder of Mulgrave Castle as it stood at first, and it was not to be supposed that such a giant as that could have been without a mighty big hoard, and a right suitable place to keep it in as well. And really and truly the old, old story is that there was just such a treasure, and just such a wonderful place that no one knew, and still less was able to reach, where the hoard was stored safely away.

But perhaps the best way will be for me to tell you just what I was told myself, less than twenty years ago, by a great nobleman who had been much interested, as well as myself, only just before, in digging up what proved to be one of the great stones that had marked Giant Wade's grave. It was so long and so big and heavy that three strong farm-horses could not drag it out of the hole we had dug around it, when we wanted it out of the way, so as to be able to go on with our digging. Well, the story he told me about the very treasure I was speaking about, and the place where it was believed to be kept, and what one of his own fore-elders had done, and caused to be done, on purpose to find this great treasure, and which he had heard was supposed to be still stored away in some strange mysterious

vault or treasure-chamber beneath the Castle, was much of the following kind. This great lord had some way or other found out where to begin the work of seeking. I can't remember, even if I was told, how he had got to know anything about it: but anyway he had got together a number of men, masons and other workpeople, with mattocks and spades and crowbars, and everything else that was necessary for breaking through strong mason-work, as well as digging up the ground, and making a sufficient entrance beneath the very foundations of the Castle, if they found it necessary, as it very well might be, for such exciting proceedings as theirs were going to be, and with such consequences as they might have.

Well, they dug and dug, and broke their way through great thick walls of stone and lime, which sounded hollow to the blows of the tools; and at the last, after hours and hours of heavy toilsome labour, they found the entrance to a deep dark vaulted passage. When they had got lights and made their way in—some of the party not being too exceedingly bold about it, notwithstanding their wondering expectation of what the treasure would prove to be that they were going to find—they groped their way along, keeping pretty much together, mainly because nobody liked to be left behind, and at last, though they had not gone very far really, their steps and hushed voices sounding very hollow and wisht

all the time, they came to some big, black folding-doors, made of iron, so strong and thick and massive, they had no tools fit or qualified for making a way through them, or even forcing an opening wide enough to let a ray of light through, and much more the edge of a gavelock or any other strong tool.

So they had to wait until the smith and his men, with their sledge-hammers and wedges, and other tools suitable, could be sent for ; and when at last they came, and they began to batter at the iron and try to get wedges in, or break a bit out here or there, so as to get the point or edge of a tool in to prise with, the clash and clatter and din were so fearful that the faint-hearted ones got far too frightened to stay any longer, and crept fearfully out and to the open air.

At last the iron doors began to yield a little. Then there was more hammering and more prising with the gavelocks and crowbars, and little by little the opening was forced to grow wider. And then, at last, all at once, they gave way with a horrid, creaking groan and shattering crash, and flew open with such suddenness and violence that it quite seemed as if they were flung open by some indignant hands from behind, and with much more than mortal force and violence. And then—WHAT ?

All that the anxiously-peering eyes of the expectant but startled spectators could clearly see was a huge iron chest, quite black, and quite full of jewels

and gold and all kind of costly and precious things, of a value far past all reckoning, nay, even past all guessing. But what!—no one dared stretch forth a finger, much more a hand, to grasp it, or the slightest matter there was there. For it was GUARDED! A monstrous black fowl was there brooding over the upper surface of the treasure—iron chest and all its contents! Some who saw it said it was like a gigantic black hen; others that it was a raven, only much vaster than an ordinary eagle; and others that it was something infinitely worse and horribly more awful than any earthly fowl whatever.

Well, it glared at them with awful eyes; it began to ruffle its feathers, and the rustle was almost like the rattle of rusty chains; and a dreadful crest rose on its head, and a forked tongue issued out of its mouth and played about ominously and threateningly; and there was not one among the intruding company who dared to face it a moment longer, and all fled, with such a terrible sound of infernal scorn and menace ringing in their ears as the fowl cried aloud after them, that they all fell utterly bereft of sense and consciousness on reaching the outer air once again.

But when they came to themselves, all was closed up again, and there was not a sign to show where they had been digging or had broken their difficult way within—nothing but the fresh, unturned, springing sod, and the old, gray, firm, unbroken masonry!

Well, but if all this was told me only such a few years, such a very short time ago, and told me, moreover, as a thing that had happened not so very long since, you can fancy what was likely to be the tradition and the belief and the feeling such a long time ago, when Sir Jack the Giant-crusher was still alive, and proceeding with the accomplishment of those great deeds and exploits of his that you have heard of from me, and which made him so wonderfully famous at the time as well as among future generations. And so, as I said, he had been with much ceremony and observance asked to go over to the Castle, because it was held for certain that with his knowledge and singular experience he would be a hundred times the most likely person to find out where the treasure was—for every one was quite sure there was a treasure there—and, besides that, to put the Castellan in the way of getting at it, if mere human beings could by any means get at it at all.

And this was the reason why he was at the Castle just when the poor Goathland people, in their sore peril and apprehension and anxiety, were minded to think of his prowess and crave help from his renowned wisdom and craft and might.

But Sir Jack had already heard—don't you think it would have been strange if he hadn't?—of the doings at St. Julian's and at Goathland, and had asked his questions about it all, and heard pretty

near all there was to hear ; and perhaps a little more than was altogether fact—just as is safe to be the case when people have to tell of anything very strange or altogether bad and frightful.

There is another thing too we may make ourselves pretty sure about, knowing him as we do from all we have heard about him already, and that is that he had been anything rather than fast asleep, or even dozing, during the day or two he had already been staying at the castle. In reality, he had never been very much more wide awake in his life. Again, I hardly need tell you that he had his Staff with him. Indeed, he never went very far away in any direction without it, for, as you remember, it helped him to make his journeys from one place to another with quite wonderful speed ; and, besides that, he always had the wisest, subtlest counsellor present that hero ever had or could have, as long as he had his Staff within reach, or at least near enough to have recourse to in times of difficulty and perplexity.

I daresay you have all of you, or at least most of you, heard about the wonderful thing called the 'Divining Rod,' and of the strange discoveries often made by its help ; and how books have been written about its virtues and its use, and what has really been done by such as know how to use it rightly, and that there are hundreds and hundreds of people now living who are quite firmly persuaded that it is all, every word of it, true. You know it is a

straight twig or stick of hazel, ending in a fork, though some people say that mountain ash, or (as some folks call it) witch-wood, sticks or twigs are better; and some even say that a right-shaped twig of any tree will do just as well. And what is said about it is, that when it is held between the fore-fingers of the two hands so that it can turn easily like a thing on an axis between two supports, it will turn of its own accord whenever the bearer comes near, or over, a place where there is a spring of water beneath the surface of the ground that no one ever knew of before; or a lode of some ore, silver or lead or tin, that would be well worth mining for; or hidden hoards of gold and silver coins, and so forth.

Well, but don't you think that, with such a staff as Sir Jack had, with such a strangely wise and mysteriously powerful energy or being as was present with the Eye preserved in the socket in its head, he would be likely to be far better off, and in the same ways too, than the Divining-rod man, with his poor paltry hazel rod of a yard or less long, with a natural fork at the end?

I do at all events; and so I was not at all surprised at understanding that Sir Jack had got to know a good deal about the treasure at the Castle, and where it was, and how it could be approached, before he had been any great length of time at the place.

But then, I must tell you also that he had been able to learn about a good deal more than this particular matter that has been last mentioned. He had not only heard about there being underground passages beneath the Castle, going a long, long way, some of them, and leading in different directions away from the Castle ; but much even besides that. Why, I myself have often heard that one of these secret passages led straight down to the sea, which is a good mile off ; and that another led all the way to that grand old Abbey, some small but beautiful remains of which still stand on the cliff at Whitby, nearly, or quite fully, four miles off. Perhaps though I made a mistake in saying they 'led straight' to those places, for that would only be true for those who knew the way. To all others there were so many turnings and twistings that it was very much more than easy to get lost in them ; so lost, I mean, as never to be able to find the way out again. Nay, I have even seen, at least I have had the supposed entrance to the underground way down to the sea pointed out to me ; and one day, when I had been digging and ransacking about, at and near this alleged entrance, a very great lady who had come thither to see what was going on, really asked me if I had found, or thought I should be able to find, the subterranean passage in question. So you see she thought there might be, perhaps even must be, some truth in the old, old story she had

heard ever since she had come to live at the new Castle.

Well, Sir Jack, as I said, had not only heard all about these deep, dark, mysterious passages, but he had made it his business to know about them, and to know all that could possibly be got to be known about them ; and in point of fact, he had spent the second night he was at the Castle, when everybody supposed he was fast asleep in the beautiful little bed that had been specially prepared for him, in going all through this twisting, tortuous, mazy labyrinth of secret and now disused passages. Of course, he was well and effectually guided by his Staff, and got to know from or through the intelligence in the Eye where each one went to, and what old Giant Wade had meant and planned for when he fashioned them so ; and one bit of what he got to know in this way was such as to be very useful to him when his help, as it came to pass, was craved in the matter of the Church-grim Goat of Goathland.

For my own part, I am not quite sure he had not entertained some thoughts about undertaking the adventure of trying, on his own suggestion, to master the Goat the first opportunity that offered itself. But I am very sure of one thing, and that is, that he did not mean to undertake it without first consulting with the Little Lady Red, who could always explain to him the teachings and meaning of the Eye in all difficult and perilous undertakings

so much more easily and fully than he could get to understand them by himself.

So when, on the third day after he got to the Castle, the pitiful condition and the anxious entreaties of the Goathland folks were conveyed to him, he said he was not quite unacquainted with the circumstances of the case, or with the parlous difficulty of the enterprise that was suggested; but that he must take at least twenty-four hours to consider, and take counsel about the matter: but he added, that if the deputation would come again on the next day but one, at the same time, he would then tell them whether it was possible that anything could be done to help them, and also whether he himself could really undertake the management, or attempt the execution, of the arduous business.

I daresay you will already have guessed that what he wanted particularly was to have an opportunity of taking counsel with his dear, wise-like little wife. At all events, when all was quiet in the Castle, in virtue of orders given by the Castellan, he was silently let out at the cunningly-devised postern of the great building, which gave upon a secret passage across the wide deep moat (which I myself found out one of the days I was digging all about there), and once clear of all the wood there was thereabouts, even far more than there is still, he soon began his speedy journey towards Rouge Manoir.

Long before morning broke, all was arranged for the timely departure of Little Lady Red as soon as ever it was light enough to make it safe to undertake such a long and rather difficult journey ; and when this was all duly cared for, Sir Jack started off himself alone on his return to the Castle. But if you had been there to see, you would have noticed that he did not go back the way he came. He took really quite a different direction, to the south-east, instead of to the north-east.

Like a wise and prudent general, he wanted to see and make himself well acquainted with the look and lay of the country where the fight would have to be fought, if it should be found, on consultation, wise-like and well to engage with the gruesome foe. So he took the best way he could to Goathland ; and if you had seen the width and the depth of some of the bogs and morasses he had to cross, and the steepness and ruggedness of some of the hills he had to surmount in that straight-across-the-country trip of his, I think you would have opened your eyes wider than ever they were opened before.

However, he mastered all, difficulties and distance and everything, quite easily, and reached Goathland churchyard before the earliest or wakefullest cock crowed his first crow. Now this was what he had wanted and aimed for. Because he wanted to see with his own eyes what the Church-grim Goat was like, and not to have to depend only on the terror-

coloured accounts he had had from the country-folks themselves ; and from all he had heard, or been able to collect in answer to inquiry, he expected that the phantom-animal would just be going to his lair in the church-tower at that time in the morning.

Truly he was not disappointed ; and still less was he sorry that he had been able to see for himself, and with his mystic Staff in his grasp. Black as death, huge and dread as the terrible Dun Cow herself, with beard and hair long and tangled and trailing, each hair bristling with fire-sparks, horns that curved backwards and then upwards, with a menacing curve, and two yards from tip to tip, the points as sharp as flames from a great furnace—such was the Church-grim Goat ! And Sir Jack, safe on the neck of his Staff, surveyed him at his leisure, and thought and pondered with himself over the question, ‘ How could a creature like that, if he *was* really a “creature” ; and still more, how could a phantom such-like, if he were truly a “phantom,” and nothing else but a “phantom,” be successfully, or even equally, dealt with by one of weak mortal mould only ? ’ Nor was his questioning discontinued, and he might have been forgiven if it had swelled almost to misgiving, when he saw the dreadful-looking thing go through the narrow straitened slit or ‘ dream-hole ’ in the tower, a hundred times too little for it, as it evidently seemed, and so find entrance within the tower itself. For he thought within himself that whether it were

'thing' or 'being,' if it could lessen itself so at will, it would surely be very hard to have to contend with, or even to contrive against, with any good hope of circumventing and finally mastering it.

After noticing with close anxious observation every thing and every place, and almost every minute feature and object about for a mile or so round the church—for he stayed there nearly till the day had fully dawned—and then having had a scrutinising look, as he passed, at St. Julian's and its deserted walls, and the desolate moats surrounding it, and especially having closely noted the traces of the might and malice of the Goat, as shown by the half-ruined and dismantled condition of the adjoining chapel (which had been left as he left it the night before the evil Baron died), he sped along towards the Castle, taking his course along the great Causeway because it was the least interfered with or interrupted by wood and any other obstacles to the free exercise of the speed of his wonderful bearer; and thus he reached the place he was bound for in good time to save any questioning as to where he had been and what he had been there for; and then, when he thought that his little lady's equipage was fairly on its way, and perhaps approaching towards the half-way halting-place, he went forth to meet her, only giving himself time to reach the great Round Hill there is just off the direct road to Mulgrave near the halting-place named, so as to be able to exchange

thoughts by aid of his Staff with those that were now dwelling below it. For, of course you remember that, now the Giants and the Dwarfs equally, both of them cruel enemies to the gentle Fairies and harmless Elves, were disposed of, there was peace and quiet for all such, and they were able to return to their old haunts, such of them as were left, and dwell there in comfort and safety. And I don't think I need tell you they were good friends with him who had been the means of deliverance to the Fairy Princess from her sad bondage, and was taking such diligent and observant care of her until the fated time for her full deliverance should come round.

Well, he had his thought-talk with them, which, there was no doubt, was very much to the purpose : but he did not tell any one save the Little Lady Red a word of what had taken place ; and for my own part, I don't even suppose that any one else so much as suspected that anything had passed to be talked about.

About half-way between the Round Hill and the great boulder stones of Giant Wade's grave that I told you about, a cavalcade from the Castle met the party escorting the Little Lady ; and it was a grand procession that entered the frowning precincts of the Castle itself. I cannot tell you of all, or half, the cheer that was made for her there, or in what quaint and noble delights and devices the afternoon and evening were spent and hastened on their way. But

I can tell you that after all the festivities were over, and quiet reigned throughout the withdrawing rooms and the castle generally, an earnest and somewhat anxiously engrossing consultation took place between Sir Jack, the Little Lady Red, the aged hermit from the Goathland Hermitage, and the Reeve of the afflicted township of Goathland ; and it was carried on until quite late in the night. And even after that, there was no rest for the Little Lady and her gallant little husband, for they were closeted with the Staff almost till cock-crow again.

But I ought not to let you suppose that there were no others present at this latest conference besides the two named, or the three, if you count the Staff for one : as I do. For more than one or two of the dwellers beneath the Round Hill just now mentioned were there too ; and they had much to tell of what they, and such as they, knew or could obtain knowledge of, about the secret nooks and recesses, both above ground and below, amid the wild surroundings of the Goathland Church and the moor-side below.

And then a strange and unheard-of thing befell : for it was nothing less than the willing, though but for a very short space only, absence of the wonderful Eye from Sir Jack's custody and the head of his Staff. It had never left that safe asylum and observant guardianship before, since Sir Jack, under its own guidance and direction, had fashioned and ordained

it ; nor indeed had such an event ever before been suggested or supposed likely, so long as Sir Jack remained among the living dwellers on the earth.

But now it was going forth with the Elfin company from the Round Houe, to seek the Guardian of the Treasure in the weird chamber below the Castle where the precious hoard was so jealously safeguarded. I cannot of course tell you all that happened, or was mentioned, in the course of this quest. I can only tell you that it was altogether successful, and that the Guardian did not wear the form either of a huge raven, or a gigantic black fowl, or any other terrific semblance or shape, and one other thing besides this ; and that was the thing that had chiefly perplexed the Intelligence in the Eye, and the Little Lady Red, and much more the wise and redoubtable Giant-crusher himself.

For we have already noticed how mystified and perplexed he was at the shifting, baffling, incomprehensible, bewildering nature of the Goat itself, which at the foot of the church-tower was quite monstrous in bigness, but yet became small enough in a twinkle to pass in at the narrow slit I called the dream-hole, and which with the others in the three other walls had been left just to suffer the sound of the bells to pass more freely out. He could think of no plan that seemed likely to end in compassing the mastery of a thing or being of such a nature and with such qualities as these.

But still, as we shall see, something had been learnt, and some scheme had in consequence been suggested, in the course of that mysterious visit to the more mysterious Guardian of the hoarded Treasure of the Castle vaults.

Well, the time that had been fixed for the return of the Deputation, and the Deputation itself, arrived, two of the members, as we have already intimated, having tarried during the interval in the Castle itself; and then Sir Jack, with great dignity and still greater solemnity, said that he thought the great enterprise was one which might be worthily undertaken; and that, although the conditions were perilous, and above all, strangely mysterious, still he had a good hope about the issue, if they who belonged to the distressed township did the part allotted to them faithfully and diligently and well, and above all resolutely and bravely. The peril was undoubtedly great, and sufficient to appal any but very constant and resolute souls. For, if they failed, all who looked upon the great Goat-Grim, and on whom he cast his evil eye, would be sure to perish, whether it were he, Sir Jack, the speaker, or any one else of those who conducted the enterprise and attempt. If they were brave and resolute enough to dare all without blenching in the hour of trial, and would give diligence faithfully to follow out all his instructions, he thought that they surely could not fail.

Now, we know already how unhappy and distressed and almost desperate they were under the terrible infliction of the Grim, and all that he brought upon them and theirs; and it would have been strange indeed if at least the courage of desperation had found no place in their breasts. But there were brave and constant men among them, and they pledged themselves to do all they possibly could to carry out the little Champion's orders. 'He shares the danger with us,' they said, 'and it would be a shame and a disgrace if we were such cowards and sneaks as to shrink and fail ourselves.'

Well, the first thing he told them that would have to be done, was the digging of three rows of pits, each three yards deep and three yards wide, and each pit to be three yards away from those on either side of it, and each row to have three-times three-times three pits in it. And they were to cover them all over as fast as they were dug with boughs from the trees in the forest near, or with boards or poles and rushes and brackens and ling from the moor, so that no one, not even the grisly Goat himself, could see into them or get to spy out anything about them. For it was certain that he would notice them, and most likely think they had something to do with graves, which were his particular province; and that these pits must be encroachments on his domain, a thing

which would make him dreadfully jealous, of course, if it did chance to come into his head.

Not that Sir Jack cared whether he was jealous or not, although he had a reason for having so many pits made,—you can go to the Killing Pits yourselves, if you like, and see how many there are, and whether they are not arranged as I have told you Sir Jack said they were to be,—and his reason for making so many, and for giving such strict orders about their being so closely covered up, was that he wanted to rouse the Goat to at least curious if not jealous scrutiny, and at the same time to baffle his curiosity and bewilder him if he attempted to search the matter out.

For one of these holes was intended to be altogether different from any of the others: it was to go much deeper than only three yards, and for a very particular reason and a very particular purpose, which Sir Jack was very earnest in desiring to keep quite private and unsuspected. It was intended to penetrate to one of the subterranean passages running in different directions from the Castle, which I have spoken about before, and which, as I also told you before, Sir Jack, under the special guidance he had, had succeeded in tracing and following in all their different directions, and through all their devious windings and twistings. Now, one of these passages, as might be expected, led in the end to St. Julian's Castle; and he had found

that, whether intentionally or not, it ran just close to that wretched walled-in cell in which the poor hapless maiden had been buried alive (rather than merely immured) and with which a never-to-be-broken connection with the Spinner was to be firmly established.

And now I must tell you more plainly what it was that had come to Sir Jack's knowledge, and had made the Little Red Lady so very anxious as she showed in those deep conferences by night I mentioned to you, as to the only way in which the Church-grim Goat could be worsted in the struggle and effectually weakened and subdued.

You remember, no doubt, that the Worm of the Whorle Hill could be slain by no weapon forged by mortal hands, and how the Erne could only be destroyed in its own element, the air namely, and then by no merely mortal agency, or shaft of man's manufacture. But the conditions affecting the Church-grim Goat were even harder and more mysterious still than those. A being or phantom that was not in any sense mortal, hardly a 'being' at all, really; a phantom with strange influence on, and power over, other beings; could hardly be slain or put to death; and it seemed very hard to see how, changeable and able to expand itself to giant size at will, or contract itself to almost tiny dimensions, it could be either constrained, or dealt with effectually, and much more quelled

and reduced to impotence or nothingness. What was there that *could* be done? What even was there for the wisest mind to think of, the subtlest brain to devise?

Now, this was the task before Sir Jack, and those who were his allies and had undertaken to be his helpers in the strife, and the sharers of his peril.

Well, the time he fixed for the attempt was the eve of the fatal day on which, but such a few years before, the blood-stained foundations of the Castle of St. Julian's and the holy building that was to be the Goathland church had been laid, and the hideous wickedness of the founder committed. And this time was fixed because it was known but too widely and too well that then the terrible Kirkgrim was most rampant and most fatal, and the Spinster (of late so rarely to be seen) was customarily to be seen (if at all), or at the least heard, and near the church as well as close to St. Julian's.

But I ought to tell you more particularly that from the time the last of those who were directly concerned in her cruel sacrifice had passed away for ever, although the Goat had been so much more fell and more fatal than before, the hapless Spinner, whenever she was seen (never without her spindle), was always seen to be of a sad countenance, her face furrowed with sorrow and the ceaseless running down of tears. And the sounds that were heard

whenever it was known or felt that she was near were not those of vengeance or pitiless pursuit, but of sobbing and moaning as of one in sore sorrow and distress. This too had been reported to Sir Jack, and by him duly noted and dwelt upon.

Well, the pits were all dug, and as carefully covered over from obtrusive spying as the designer had desired, and he himself, so easily and speedily conveyed by his Staff, had ascertained that, night after night, the muffled footfalls of the Goat testified to the fact that he betook himself, as soon as ever he issued from his lair, straight down to the Killing Pits: for they had already begun to be called so, because the townsfolks had got the idea—a mistaken one as we know—that the terrible Church-grim Goat was somehow or other to be done to death, actually slain, killed outright, there. And Sir Jack had seen, too, that a coffin which by his orders had been borne to the excavations there, and left as if the mourners and others had fled through fear, leaving it uninterred, had, on two occasions when the plan had been tried, roused the Church-grim to some such manifestation of wrath as had been so fearfully shown on the night before the evil Baron died.

Well, the fateful night arrived at last, and the banded men of Goathland were there according to their word, in small groups, concealed so that even the Goat himself could not detect their presence in

the nearest pits around the deep one, while close by its side were to be seen two large black-covered coffins, with a black vehicle close by, arrayed with tall, nodding black plumes, and with four coal-black horses yoked to it. But Sir Jack himself was not there: his place was elsewhere; and he was not unattended, though those that were with him were hardly to be discerned by ordinary eyes, small, pale, bluish-looking tongues of flame being all that was clearly visible to human spectators.

Sir Jack had betaken himself to his usual post of observation whenever he had been there to watch the proceedings of the dreaded Church-grim; and there he waited patiently until the gruesome thing issued forth from its lair. His fearful srike was heard a moment later, for four of the small flames were lost to sight in an instant, and four fleeing figures were seen as if in terrified flight in the direction of the Killing Pits. I daresay the Goat, according to his custom lately taken up, would have gone there of his own accord; but had there been any hesitation these figures would have decided him, and away he went in pursuit. Sir Jack easily kept pace with his excited rush, and the other flames were seen passing through the air like shooting stars far ahead of the pursuing monster.

He was not long, you may be sure, in reaching the pits, and when he saw the horses and the plumy black wain, and a company round the open pit, and

the lowering of coffins going on—for this was the illusion those elves of the morass, the fleeting flames, had in charge, and were right skilled in, as matter of daily use—Oh! you cannot imagine the blood-curdling cry the Grim gave forth nor the awful rush he made among the seeming mourners and attendants. They dropped the coffin, and all but two or three who seemed to fall with it into the open pit, scattered on all sides. The Phantom Goat was more intent on the coffin and the fallen ones than on those without, and precipitated himself after them, making himself suitably less in an instant.

The same moment the figure of the Spinner was plainly seen on the very brink, but looking so changed, the marks of tears were no longer on her face, nor was there any sobbing or sound of weeping. Her white raiment glistened with a strange shimmering, pearly lustre, and rustled faintly as, with eager industry, she twined her thread crossing and recrossing the black-looking cavity, but always working the fateful way, *withersins*, or against the sun (as it is called), so that before the reappearance of the Church-grim, which was delayed but for the briefest space, there was a mysterious web ready to enmesh him as he issued forth. And thus, when he thought to rush out, in far direr wrath than before, because he had found no human forms but only lambent flitting flames, and a mock coffin, he was caught, entangled, constrained, confined, and his first effort,

which was to enlarge himself and violently burst the bonds, only bound him more closely and inevitably ; while, when his next attempt was to contract himself and so become small enough to escape between the wider meshes, the Spinner's marvellous thread, as deadly and tenacious as of yore when the evil baron was dealt with, closed but the more tightly and the more resistlessly upon him, and his phantom shape and substance was compressed to the size of a mere kid of a day or two old.

But the victory, though won, was not secured and improved as yet, although the means of securing it had been thought of and provided for; and it was a marvellous thing indeed that the rejoicing though still concealed spectators were next enabled to behold. The eyes of the caged or trammelled Phantom-shape still glared and gleamed, and would have stricken death among them had they ventured to come forth yet ; and, by the baleful light they gave, it was seen that Sir Jack, in the rear of the vanquished thing—for he too was mortal—handed a strange-looking, flexible, gleaming object to one among the attendant figures who were encircling the still writhing captive, which was placed on the ground close beside his entangled form, and opened out to such an extent as easily to admit it within, bound as it was, and that, on the instant of complete enclosure, it shrank together with a sudden clash, and continued to contract and lessen, compressing

the enclosed captive until it was no larger than the egg of the great bird we have often heard of but never seen.

And now the Church-grim Goat was harmless and helpless. For the prison he was shut up in so closely and crampingly was nothing else than the mysterious prison framed by the weird craft and skill of the Dwarfs of the Round Hill in Fryup for the confinement of the Fairy Princess, and which, although it had never been needed since the Staff had been devised and so deftly fashioned, had been most carefully preserved among the other precious, or mystical, or curious trophies won by the proof of Sir Jack's wisdom, bravery, and prowess.

But what was to be done with the captive? For surely that was a question of no little moment and importance.

That too had, however, been duly considered, and was already ordained; and the next thing was to see that the plan ordained was duly and fittingly fulfilled. But for its execution the united force of all the Goathland men who were present was as requisite as were their concurrence and co-operation in the toilsome digging of the Killing Pits. It was safe for them now to issue forth from the pits in which they had been concealed during the actual struggle, and the thing they had to do, was to lower the enchained Goat in its magically fashioned prison down into the abyss-like dark passage, communicat-

ing with the Castle, as you remember. It might be thought, at first sight, ‘Well, there could not be much difficulty about that. A thing no bigger than the egg of a big fowl could easily be handled and dealt with surely !’

But that is our mistake : for when the time came to lift it and transfer it from the place where it lay to the sort of sling in which it was to be lowered down, it was more than the strength of the two strongest men there could do, even to stir it ! So small that only two men could touch it at the same time ; and yet so heavy that it seemed to be built into the foundations of the world !

But even this had been foreseen and provided for by Sir Jack and his knowful associates. The black wain looming large in the dusk and with its waving plumes, when stripped of them was presently and easily brought up and fitted with two long bands such that it might be slung and lowered into the dark chasm, these bands being too strong to be broken, for they were made of thread that had been spun by the Spinner, and on purpose for such use. Still there was the ponderous weight to be thought of, and how was that to be overcome ?

But there was a remedy for that also : for the moment the steel point of Sir Jack’s Staff was inserted beneath it, and lever-like pressure applied, the weight began to fail and the reluctant object was laid on the wain. And then it was lowered down

in the sling, all holding on to the bands and giving all their strength to the labour. The bands did not fail, and the last danger was surmounted ; for, had they tried to roll the oppressive weight down the hole, or had their hands slipped, or their hearts failed the men who held them, so that a fall ensued, the Goat might have obtained his freedom again, and then all would have been ruined. But all held firm, and all was well.

For, once at the bottom of the shaft, the mysterious burden was borne to the dread treasure-chamber I told you of, and consigned to the watchful care of the awesome guardian of the hoard. And I think you know already from the story that was told to me about the matter whether he was likely to suffer any mortal being ever to interfere for its removal.

That Sir Jack's fame grew no less after such an achievement as this you don't need me to tell you ; nor yet that the elves, and others of the like nature, who had helped in the winning of the victory, had been willing allies with the Princess and her valiant champion, and needed no acknowledgments : nor yet that the Spinner got her release, and has never been seen spinning since, or heard to give utterance to so much as a single sob or sigh.



## HOW SIR JACK RESTORED ITS HEAD TO THE HEADLESS HART OF THE HART LEAP

SOME people know that there is a place on the high ridge between Great Fryup and Glaisdale called 'The Hart Leap,' but there are a very great many more who do not. And quite likely some of those who do know about it, have never been there to see it, or perhaps made much inquiry concerning it, and yet might like to know something about it. So I will tell you a little of its history.

What I will say first is that the place which has had that name given to it is not very far from a roadway leading up from one part of Glaisdale towards Rosedale and that neighbourhood. Next, it lies not very far from a line of butts built up for grouse-shooting purposes, and not much further from a large group of pits in the surface of the

moor, like the Killing Pits at Goathland, only not quite so much in rows, and numbering a good many more. Furthermore, it is marked by two very old and time-worn stones, standing up not very high above the surface, but still very visible when any one is looking carefully about for them.

Well, these two stones are just forty-two feet, or fourteen yards, distant from one another, and the old story about them—and there was almost sure to be an old story about two such stones so placed—is that a hart, not a mere stag only, but a ‘hart,’ being very hard pressed in the chase, at least by the deer-hounds in pursuit of it, made a leap of this extraordinary length in a last desperate and convulsive effort to escape.

But I never heard, nor could find any one to tell me, who the hunters were, or any particulars of the chase, nor how an exhausted animal found the strength necessary to accomplish a leap so marvellous.

To be sure the Hart of Hart-leap Well, sung of by the poet Wordsworth, seems to have done more marvellous things still, for he made three leaps, all very strange for the length of them. But then there were ‘nine roods of sheer descent,’ the poet says—and we know very well that but a little impulse starts even a lifeless thing, such as a stone, bounding in a most wonderful way, when once it has been set rolling down a steep

hill. I remember that a stone I once set rolling down the landward side of St. Abb's Head in Berwickshire made three bounds, the second bound, of about twenty yards in length, taking it right through a stone wall or dyke (as it is called there), knocking a huge hole or 'slap' in it as it passed ; the third, however, being a shorter one because it was taken from soft cultivated soil.

But whether or no, there is the Hart Leap on the Fryup Rigg I have named ; and there is the lame story that I have mentioned, which, to one who wants to know all about it, is very like a single drop of water to a poor parched body who wants a real good drink ; for it only leaves him in a more longing state than he was in before. And then, as to the Hart-leap Well story, one would like to know more about that, and about the 'Sir Walter' who rode that chase, and his over-ridden steed, and hounds that had failed from exhaustion, and all the rest of the tale. Because, one can't help thinking that if the hounds had failed, and the hunter's horse had foundered, by reason of the length and severity of the chase, there scarcely could have been any pressing necessity for the hart to make such startling bounds to get away, when practically the chase was over. And, just so, I have always thought that there must be a fuller story about our own home Hart Leap, with more particulars belonging to it ; and that one of those particulars must have been that

the hounds were well up with the deer, and that, at all events, the deer had not been fleeting before them for thirteen hours at a stretch.

Well, as I think, you all know that I have been in the way of finding up a good few curious and interesting tales about what had already happened, and was still in the way of happening, in those strange old days when giants and fairies and dwarfs, and all such-like beings, were much more abroad, and very much more lively as well, than they have become now in the days when boys and girls at the Board Schools learn heaps of history, and when there's a newspaper-man behind every wall or hedge, to put it down in his note-book if a body happens to sneeze three times in the lucky way, or has grown a gooseberry as big as a cocoa-nut, or had a hen that hatched a fine brood of black crows, all full-fledged. In reality, we know very well indeed that all those beings I have mentioned are a sort of folks who don't care to get into the newspaper; and that fairies don't like tourists any more than tourists would relish meeting a gruff and greedy giant.

Now among those curious, and some of them rather remarkable stories which I have, as I say, found up, or come upon in some strange way, there was one—quite as well attested as those others I have told you about the worshipful Sir Jack the Giant-crusher and his doings—which gave me quite a surprising insight into the circumstances which

connect themselves with the Hart Leap on Fryup Ridge.

But before I begin to make you as wise as myself by telling you all about it, I must first tell you that a long while ago I knew a man very well who lived at an out-of-the-way house, in a wild part of Commandale, called Skelderskew, whose Christian name was Reuben, and who told me some of the most wonderful things I have ever heard, even from the lips of other great tellers of wonders whom I used to know, and who, like Reuben, have been dead for many long, long years. It was Reuben who taught me how to foretell or, as they call it, prognosticate, what the coming winter was going to be like, many weeks before it could even be expected to set in. He told me too about the Lady-mist, and whence and how it came, and what it signified, or what might be expected to come of it. He also told me a very great deal about the Gabriel-rachet—or Gaab’rl ratchet, as he sounded the name—and all that it could ever foreshow if one had knowfulness and experience enough to comprehend. Nay, he even told me that he had both seen and heard the same on two different occasions, and that it meant death, in the one case to a son of his own, and in the other to a young woman whom he was just then going to visit, and who was lying grievously sick at the house he was drawing near to. He described to me the large glowering eyes of the great silently-flying bird

which crossed his path, its cruel hooked beak, and its ear-piercing scrike that made him shudder to hear it.

But he had not so much to tell me, though he did tell me a good deal, about the other sort of visitation of the Gabriel-rachet, which was often to be heard by night, though never seen, and which was always taken to betoken calamity and lamentation, and perhaps death itself, to the unfortunates who were belantered, and chanced to have the shuddering experience of its weird, rushing, crying passage through the air above them, far away from home or shelter. I knew of one farm-girl who heard it one night, and who fled almost as if she was crazed into the outer kitchen (the first room she could reach in the house she lived in), slammed to the door, bolted it top and bottom in great haste, throwing her apron over her head as she did so, so that the omen might pass over and leave her unharmed.

Neither do I wonder at people that are easily frightened, being frightened under the circumstances. I remember, a great many years ago, when I was out on the wild waste moor, with no house and no human being near me (two or three miles away the nearest, perhaps), on a still, fine, though not sunshiny day, I heard all at once and without any sort of warning, a sweeping, rushing sound in the air above me and near me, as if there was a wild wind tearing

its way along. But the ling at my feet, or anywhere near me, never moved, never trembled even : only this weird, mysterious, rushing sound. And though I was not frightened, and my heart went no faster than a moment before, I remember how my hair on my head seemed to stand up of itself, and my flesh crept, and my skin seemed to grow tight and wrinkly, as I heard the sound sweep by and could see neither cause nor explanation.

And this was in the broad daylight. How much more then in the darkness of the still night, and all at once you hear the soughing rushing noise as if of a great host passing along overhead, and the muffled sound, like many horses tramping, and the cries of hounds, or what surely seems to be such, as your ear says it is, all, as surely as you are there yourself, in the welkin above you ; and still you cannot see a thing, while the sound only grows the more distinct the more you pause to listen : why, I think there is really something to frighten not very timid folks in all that. And that is what the Gabriel-rachet is, this strange thing. I have heard it myself, as well as been told of it by many ; and ever so long ago, I made up my mind that I would try and make out if anybody in this part of the country knew anything certain about it, or could give any sort of explanation of it, or of what it meant or how it came to be.

Well, before long, I heard two or three bits of

stories, but nothing that seemed to be quite such as I felt sure there must be ; nothing at all that seemed like giving any real explanation. But still I went on inquiring ; and at last I was more lucky, because I had a story told me about a man who in the old, old days had lived somewhere in these parts, and who was fonder of hunting than of anything else in this world, or out of it. He had what folks now would call ‘hunting on the brain.’ I don’t know now many hunting horses, or how many hounds, or perhaps packs of hounds, he had, but more, I suppose, than could be easily counted ; and the more he hunted—and I fancy he hunted anything that came in his way, stags or fallow deer, roe deer, foxes or hares, wild boars or wolves, badgers, otters, wild cats, and even wild cattle, if he had a chance,—but the more he hunted the fonder he grew of it ; and the more he thought of his hounds and his horses, the more jealous he got to be lest any one else should get any of the hunting that might otherwise come to be his, and the more disinclined to spend his time in any other way, or even have to think of anything, except just HUNT, HUNT, HUNT, always. Nay, it was even said that he did not care what became of him when he died, that he thought the next world would not be worth going to, if he couldn’t go on hunting there ; and as for his dogs and horses, no one else should have either benefit or sport out of them, when he couldn’t himself : and so

he gave strict orders that, when the time came, they should all be killed and buried with him. All this and more I heard at different times and from different people.

Well, the story went on that soon his time did come, and his people were afraid not to do as he had said ; and so, when he was buried, his favourite hounds were buried too in the same grave, and the poor horses were not spared either, and their carcases also were buried at the same time and as near their master's grave as might be.

But then, as the story went on, there followed a terrible judgment and sentence upon him. Inasmuch as he had not cared for anything but hunting during his lifetime, he was doomed to hunt for ever and ever ; no rest, no stay, no peace even in the happy place he had fancied and fashioned for himself, but always HUNT, HUNT, HUNT without cessation, and his hounds always to be with him, and on one night he was to be hunted himself, when the hounds would pursue him and overtake him and rend and mangle him without being able to kill him outright, of course, inasmuch as he was but a sort of ghost as well as they ; and the shapes of the horses, looming so large and fearful, were to be there, as if to be mixed up with the hunt too.

Well, this was rather a gruesome story ; but I soon found there were stories of the same sort, and more or less like to this, in many different parts of

England, and in many different places across the sea besides ; and, as might be expected, there were many different names for the stories, and many more or less varying accounts contained in them. But the endless HUNT, HUNT, HUNT was in them all, and the hounds were never absent ; and sometimes they were called ‘corpse-hounds,’ and sometimes by other names that meant the same, and in English might be written ‘lych-whelps,’ ‘lych-hounds,’ ‘corpse-trackers,’ or the like ; and even our own home name, or ‘Gaab’rl ratchet,’ I found out one day meant just exactly the same ; the first part meaning ‘dead body’ and the last part being an old English word that means a dog that hunts by scent, a hound.

Well, but, hearing of and learning about all this, and especially about that man who was understood by the people who told me the story to have lived somewhere about this part of the world, and abused his liking for the chase to such a degree, I began to think, ‘Hadn’t this Hart Leap place of ours, and the scrap or two of story tacked on to it, something to do perhaps with this doomed hunter’s doings and successes, yes, and his excesses too, in the chase ?’ and that was the thing I set myself to inquire about, and to try and find out, and in the same way and from the same source or quarter as that from whence I had got to know about Giant Grim, and Beanley Bank Jack, and our own Sir Jack, and all the wonderful

things he managed to accomplish ; and what I am going to tell you now is what I, sooner or later, was enabled to make out as the result of my inquiry.

Well, as far as my information goes, the Hart Leap really was the place where the last chase that unhappy hunter ever followed up came to its end. I suppose everybody knows that in the old far-away times there was almost no end of forest all over this country ; that Danby forest alone reached nearly nine miles in length ; and that there was forest on forest from where that ended, almost all the way down to Whitby ; and all over the country on both sides of the river, just the same. Well, in such a country, of course, all sorts of wild or forest-dwelling creatures were found, and especially the red deer or stag, the fallow deer, the roe deer, and wild pigs, as well as savage beasts, like wolves and bears. And some of these must have been almost monsters in size. Some horns that I have seen dug up out of mosses or bogs, and even out of the more solid earth by the sides of the streams, were so big and massive and strong as to be quite a sight to see.

As things turned out, or turned up, in the course of my askings and seekings, I came to such knowledge that I can now tell you there was one hart—they call them ‘stags’ I think, up to five or six years old—but this hart was far older than that ; and he was about the biggest and finest that had ever been seen in the country. He was spoken of as a Hart

among harts, all the country through ; and the name he was known by, and because of his great size and particularly dark colour, was the Mickle Black Hart of Threlkeld. And strange to say, it was only the other day that I found out where Threlkeld was. But that was the spring at which this Mickle Hart most commonly drank ; and a very remarkable spring or fountain or keld it was. Indeed, its very name shows that ; because, just exactly according to the meaning of the name, its waters rushed up so strongly from the source below, that there seemed to be a sort of whirlpool created by the strong, powerful gush.

Now, this great Hart of ours was usually to be found, when a great hunt had been arranged, not very far away from the Threlkeld, unless he had been recently disturbed, and the country had not been left quiet long enough for him to have ventured back. . . . And I can also tell you that he had been so often hunted, without either hound or horse having a chance of coming up with him, that people for some time past had got into the way of thinking that he was more than a common or ordinary hart ; and even some here and there were more than ready to fancy there must be something uncanny about him, because he always seemed to beat both hounds and hunters so very easily. But in reality I think it was partly that he was so very watchful—being so often hunted would be sure to make him that

and partly his great size and proportionably greater speed and strength must have given him an advantage over the horses and dogs.

I must now tell you that the great hunter we have been hearing about had been on this Hart's track once and again, and had always been baffled like everybody else who had ever hunted it ; and at last he made up his mind that, whatever happened, he would catch him, even if he never hunted again ; nay, even if he had to pledge his very soul for catching him, he would have him ; and so he planned to have fresh horses to meet him at two or three different places, and fresh relays of hounds, with fresh foresters, at places where almost always the Hart had passed on previous long hunts, and especially at one place where, on many previous occasions, he had been finally lost.

Well, the Hart was duly lodged, as they called seeing him safe in his evening resting-place, and he was as duly reported by the man whose business it was. When roused from his lair in the morning, he took his accustomed way, through the launds and glades, out on to the moor, back through the coppice and ferny thickets, never seeming to exert himself, or to be going beyond his ordinary somewhat leisurely rate, round the outskirts of the great forest, through its dells and more difficult passes, up the steep bank, down the next rugged, rocky fell, the hounds meanwhile coming no nearer, and the horses beginning to

fail and founder. Hours were spent in the apparently useless chase ; hound after hound gave up or dropped exhausted. Twice the hunter had changed his steed ; and still the Hart went as steadily and gallantly as ever. The place where the special relay of hounds was stationed was reached, not before it was time ; for only one of the earlier hounds was now running, and as it reached the place it dropped exhausted, and in a short time struggled a little and died. The master, mad with the rage of the hunt, heeded not, but laid on the fresh hounds. Still the noble Hart went on as before ; they could not gain an inch on him, and he seemed as fresh and unrestrained as when he was first started. Once again Threlkeld was approached, and was passed. The sun was getting low in the west, and the gallant Hart still held his own as masterfully as ever. The fresh hounds tailed off one by one ; the fourth horse was staggering, and there was the Mickle Black Hart looking darker and larger than ever in the evening light, and the keen hunter was in such wrath and disappointment as he had never felt before. Fearful curses fell from his lips. It was gruesome to listen to him ; worse still to look at him. His features were distorted with the rage he was in, and were horrid to look at. All at once, with no warning, nor anything to make him suppose any one was near, he saw a figure riding by his side as if taking part in the chase. A great black horse, as powerful and fresh as if just out of

the stable, was under him, champing on the bit as if impatient and longing to go at better speed than the tired hunter's horse was able. He gazed at the horse as if greedy after its freshness and strength, without noticing the rider ; and he thought, or almost wished aloud, 'Oh that I had that horse under me !' The next moment, or really in all but the same instant with the wish, a low deep voice that seemed to go through him asked, 'What will you give to change horses with me ?' 'Anything : everything I have in the world,' he managed to say. 'Only that ! It is too little,' replied the voice. And then, as if to urge him on, he added, 'See the Hart ! How firm and steady his stride ! And yet, with this horse you could be up with him before the sun has quite gone. Bid again.' 'All I have in the world,' said the hunter, 'and all there is in the next.' 'Done,' said the voice, adding directly after, 'but there must be no rueing your bargain. Keep your pledge, and in token you mean it, cut the Hart's head off, and hang it anywhere except in your own Hall.'

Well, the horses were changed so easily and quickly the wearied rider hardly knew how, and a strange sort of strength seemed to come back to his limbs, and a fierce joy to his heart, as he found himself coming up hand over hand with the Hart which now began to run laboriously, panting and failing and with distressful efforts. The place of the Hart Leap (as it has since been called) was reached, and

here it was that a great convulsive bound was made. Then the poor brute tottered, tried to recover itself, but failed, fell over headlong, and died.

But the successful hunter, now the chase was over, soon seemed in very little better case than the Hart he had been hunting, although he was full of exultation, and for a short time felt strong again. Slipping off his horse as well as he could, he paced round the dead beast, bethinking himself of his pledge. But he had already begun to ‘rue his bargain,’ and there rose in his mind the thought, ‘Miss having such a head as that among the rest that hung in his Hall? Never!’

It was a long time—he was so weary and beaten—before he managed to get the head hacked off at all. He meant to send for the carcase afterwards. And it was harder still to fasten it to the saddle-bow, and he would never have got into his saddle again but for the strange docility and quietness of the black steed. Even then he felt himself unable to ride along except as slowly as if at a funeral. He had never felt so worn out and exhausted in his life before.

The first tree he passed in his creeping ride homewards—it was a fine majestic oak at the northern end of the Beanley Bank covert—it seemed to him as if, while a faint waft of moist vapour met him, a low voice whispered in his ear, ‘Hang that accursed head, with its antlers, in this great tree.’

He just managed to growl out ‘Never,’ with his dry lips, and the moist vapour became a shower of drops. Continuing to make his slow painful way along, he passed through the laund below Threlkeld, skirting a clump of large well-grown trees, one of which, a big beech-tree, stood out a little from the rest; and as he drew even with it, the moist vapour, and whispered suggestion to hang the accursed head he was taking home up in that tree, came again. But he only answered it with his hoarse ‘Never,’ as he had done before. And then the wet drops fell on his face as they had done the first time. Once again, and this time scarcely a mile from his home, as he passed a line of big trees, with a large mountain ash standing out from among them, the same quiet whispering thought came to him as before, and was met by the same sullen refusal.

Well, he reached his big rambling manor-house, unloosed the head, staggered with it into the Hall, and spent the only breath left to him in giving the order that it should be hung up just as it was in the best and highest place available. This done, he sank down with exhaustion, and his people thought he had fallen dead. They took him up, however, and laid him on his bed.

He never left it again alive, though he lay and lingered there for three days. The first morning the black horse (which to the terror of the grooms had gone to a stall in the stable of itself), neighed once,

and those who heard it never forgot the terrible sound. Next day it neighed twice, and the wretched dying hunter shuddered as he heard it. The day after, three neighs were his summons to depart, and with a fearful groan of despair he died.

But what was left in the bed for burial was only a wasted, blackened mass of human flesh, and there was no black horse left in the stable to terrify the men, neither were there any living horses in the other stalls to be killed and buried with their master, nor yet any living hounds in the kennel. All were lying dead. And such funeral as there was, was—so great was the terror of the whole household—but little better than a hasty indiscriminate burial of horses and dogs with the miserable remnant that was left of their dead master.

But there was one—some said it was an old carline who was given to unholy arts and practices, and was abroad to gather deadly herbs for her evil trade, and others said it was the old hermit who lived in the cave hollowed out in the rocks below Crumbeclive—who saw a strange cavalcade on its way that awful morning, the shapes of horses without riders, one great black horse with sparks of fire flying from his eyes and faint blue flames from his nostrils, with a figure in a winding-sheet on his back, and many hounds following silently. And before them all, but not at speed or as if pursued, a large black creature, which ought to have been a stag, but

could hardly be surely said to be one, because it had no branching antlers, no head even to wear them. And the way they were taking was the way that led directly on to the Hart Leap.

But now is the time to ask what had become of the actual head, with those grand branching antlers, far exceeding in greatness and beauty those of any Hart Royal ever heard of as hunted by Kings and Princes, or chronicled by minstrel or bard?

But that is a question there was none to answer. To be sure, it was reported—but nobody seemed really to know anything certain about it—that an appearance like that of a gigantic stag's head, with great branching antlers, had been seen enveloped in a sort of whitish haze or mist that might have been vapour or small drizzling rain, fleeting through the air, and about the same time as those shapes of horses and hounds and hart, but going in another direction, namely, to the old accustomed haunt by the Threllkeld, or just the opposite way to that to the Hart Leap.

But still, there was nothing certain about the great Hart's head, except that it was not in the place where it was ordered to be set by the man who won it. And no one in the household could tell how it had been removed, and still less by whom or when the removal had been contrived. It was gone: and the mysterious manner of its going added another to the grim circumstances which had

preceded and accompanied the death of the unhappy hunter.

But all these things together, strange and fearful as they were, did not make the last chapter of the sad story. There was a great deal besides that befell, both mysterious and shocking. Men began to talk under their breath of the things which were happening. Night after night, the sounds of the hunt, but high up in the air, were heard. The heavy rushing noise of horses and hounds in hasty course, with the varied cries and yelps of the latter—sometimes a full, deep, but always harsh and discordant burst of sound ; sometimes the solitary challenge of a single dog, taken up perhaps by another after a pause ; and then the full burst from the whole pack again. But there was not only no such melody in it as is usual with the cry of hounds in the chase, but there was something which made the hearer shrink and shudder, and his hair stand up of itself, and become stiff and harsh. All who heard it said it was dree and weird, and very fearsome.

But there was worse to come ; what was sadly worse. Whenever this ‘Rushing-rout,’ these ‘Corpse-hounds,’ this ‘Gaabr’l-ratchet,’ as people variously grew to call the thing, was heard in the dusk of night with more than usual plainness, and men had been more scared than customary by the greater nearness—as they thought—of the rushing hunt,

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the next morning some poor animal—an ox or a cow, or perhaps a sheep or a swine—was found mangled and torn as if it had been killed by wolves, but not eaten, as was usual in that case, and always with its head torn off and gone, and no trace of it left.

For full three weeks after the death of the reckless hunter, who cared more for his chase than for his soul, this nightly rushing hunt in the air continued to take place; and after that there was a cessation of the horrid sounds of the night hunt, and no more sheep or cows were found dead and mutilated in the morning.

But it had not stopped for good. When the time of year came round again for the night and the day to be equal in length, things began to be just as they had been six months before. The country-folks were at their wits' end with fright and dread, and at the destruction which went on night after night among the stock. But, bad and distressing as all this was, it was but a little to what came to be experienced when the full year was complete, and the day of the great hunt itself came round again. That night, and the next night, and the next night again—the three nights through which the doomed hunter's wasting life had still lingered on—were more frightful and terrible than had ever been imagined, much more heard of, within the memory of the oldest man. Even the wild creatures

in the forest were rent and slain, and their heads torn off and carried away, no one knowing how, or who did it. Every farmstead in the country-side too lost some animal or other in the same unaccountable way. Night after night the dreadful hunt seemed to near the earth ; and near by the Threlkeld and the Hart Leap the sounds seemed more fearful than anywhere else. Everybody was in terror and dismay.

But it was the last night of the three that was the most marked and awful. No one was able to go to sleep, even if he had dared : for far and near the hunt sped on its gruesome way, round and round, as if winding through all the devious lengthened course of that mad chase, only raised a little above the earth to the near darkness above ; and mingled with the baying of the hounds and the tramping rush of the steeds and the clashing of the harness, instead of the cheers of the huntsman and the glad tones of the horn, were despairing groans and cries like those given forth by the expiring hunter, and terrible to listen to. And at midnight the whole rout seemed to bear away towards the Hart Leap, where, after a brief period of unearthly blasts of horns, wild horrible yells and cries and shouts, deep bayings of hounds, there suddenly ensued the stillest deepest silence, almost more ghastly and impressive than the wild hubbub of a moment before.

But it was in the morning that the horror of

what had really happened in the night was fully disclosed. There was not a farmstead, not even a villein's cot, where some poor torn headless creature was not found. The very dogs of the shepherds had, some of them, been taken. The fowls of the lathe-yards even had not been spared. Two of the foresters and one of the sheepfold men were found dead, and their torn and twisted limbs and headless corpses showed but too plainly what sort of a death they had died: while at the Hart Leap itself, the old marks of the death-leap of the stag were graved deep into the soil, and all within and without the circle was blasted, burnt black, almost consumed with the traces of fearful glowing hoofs.

After this again, for half a year there was peace and quiet, though the turf at the Hart Leap never grew green again. When, however, the springtide season returned, the old sounds were heard and the old visitations began again to befall. But it was not till the fatal night of the evil hunt came round once more, that all the old horrors, in no way lessened or mitigated, came upon the country afresh. There was death and destruction everywhere. The verderer was killed, the shepherds who had kept themselves in their shelters for safety-sake had not escaped; the finest stags in the forest had lost their lives and their heads; and more than one among the wolves and the wild swine had suffered in the same way. But it was at the Hart Leap itself that the dreadful

carnival had been carried on the worst. The stones that had been set up to mark the length of the last bound of the hunted creature were blackened and crushed at their tops and edges as would not have happened in the course of a whole century, and the displaced earth and sods and ground-fast rocks, all scorched and shattered, looked as if there had been an unearthly battle fought out there.

The third time the fatal days and nights came round was worse than anything before. All alike, lord, thane, franklin, priest, villein, bondsman, were stricken with terror, and no one had any remedy or resource left. Nay, there seemed no hope, no gleam of possible rescue anywhere. It was very long since the country had been so wasted and distressed, and men's hearts were really failing them for fear. But one among the oldest of the old dwellers in the neighbourhood was one day heard maundering on about the Church-grim Goat of Goathland, and he said that, according to what he recollects, the trouble then had been worse for Goathland than the present time was for the Hart Leap side of the country. But then, as is pretty sure to be the case, others began to take the other side, and to be ready to swear that the hurt and harm brought about by the Goat wasn't half as bad as what the Headless Hart was bringing to pass just at that present time. 'No doubt,' they said, 'a good few of those who were sick and weakly, and of such as were too

easily frightened, had died ; but maybe the main part of them would have died, all the same, Goat or no Goat.' But now there was safety for none. Men in their houses, the cattle in the byre, the sheep on the common, the wild animals in the forest, none of them were safe ; and it was even said by such as were much abroad that serpents and hagworms, and fiery fleeing-asks were getting to be so many, and, most of all, near the Hart Leap, that in a little time it would not be safe for man or beast to draw near that way at all.

Even this was true. Once there had been a holy saint who had banned all the poisonous crew, and sent them all to the north side of the river. But the ban must have lost its power, and the venomous creatures were rifer than even in the days before holy Hilda banished them.

There were a great many to talk, and a great deal of discussion, and plenty of contradiction, of course. But one day, a feeble quavering voice asked, 'Had anybody really seen the Hart plain enough to be sure it had no head ? Did any one know anything really about what had happened at the Hart Leap that night that folks talked so much about ?'

For a while no one took any notice of the old man who had spoken, or of what he had said. But very soon the question was taken up by others, and first one and then another said that was just what they would like to know ; and so it went on till somebody

said that the evil old carline was as likely to know as any one, and then another said, ‘For sure, the old hermit would be better to trust to than her.’ And so the talk went on with all sorts of gossip and fable.

But the old gaffer who remembered the Church-grim, though he could not talk very fast, luckily kept his wits about him, and he managed to get speech with the crooked ill-famed old woman, and after that with the hermit too, an old man as old as himself. And he got from them both all they were able to tell, and contrived to get a sort of connected story out of what they had to say. One day, however, soon after, the poor old chap was missing. He was not in his cot, nor yet in his usual seat under the big tree on the green. No one had seen him, and no one had heard anything about his going away ; so that, when the next day came, and still there were no tidings of him, it began to be thought that some unlucky fate must have befallen him.

However, on the third day it was seen that no one need have been uneasy because of him : for he made his appearance about the middle of the day, and did not come alone. There were two others with him, riding gaily caparisoned palfreys not bigger than Shetland ponies, and the riders were suiting their pace to the rather trembling footsteps of the old man ; while behind them was a nice comfortable sort of a car in which he had been carried till they

got quite near to the village itself. The two little people were a lady in red, very sweet to look upon, and a little cavalier, very handsomely dressed, who seemed to be quite past the age of youth, but active, noticing, observant still, and of a gracious and graceful courtesy and carriage. But what everybody noticed most curiously was the strange-looking Staff he held in his hand, and the ease with which he carried it, notwithstanding its being so long and so large for one no bigger than he was.

But it soon began to be whispered about that it was the famous Giant-crusher, the hero who had done so many brave things when trying to free the country from pests and scourges. To shorten the story as much as I can, Sir Jack and his Lady made much inquiry, had a long talk with the aged hermit, had the ill-famed old crone brought to where they were. And after that, Sir Jack himself bounded off, in the way we know so well, to the Hart Leap, so as to see for himself all there was to be seen and noted there. It was not long before he was back again, and then after a few words more with the people, who hoped he would find some way to deliver them, he and the Little Lady rode off home, to hold consultation there, leaving their servants to follow them more slowly.

They consulted long and gravely, and even anxiously : for it was a mysterious matter, and hard to be understood, which they had to think about.

Even the wisdom of the Staff seemed to be at fault. It all looked like a tangled skein of doubtfulness and dread. Who or what could the mysterious being on the black horse be? Who were the constantly heard, but not seen, sharers in the grisly hunt? What were the hounds, for instance, or what was their nature? What was the reason for all the wretched loss of life which followed the hunt? What was the meaning of the shape of the Hart wanting its head? How came the awful screams and groans and outcries to be sent forth? Why, really, when one began to ask questions, there seemed to be no end that came by themselves to be asked. And there seemed to be no one to ask them of.

Now, it so happened that among the strange and rare treasures Sir Jack had got out of Giant Grim's secret hoard was a crystal, very peculiar to look at, and quite lustrous as well as smooth-surfaced and polished. One very curious thing about it was that it never looked quite alike any two times together. Sometimes it was perfectly blank. Presently it was like the ink in the boy's hand when the eastern magician was doing his wonderful show, reflecting the passing of wonderful scenes. At another time it seemed to reflect whole pages of dusky, discoloured, half-illegible writing. At other times the writing was in an unknown character or an unknown tongue. But there was one peculiar and very lucky character about it: namely, that anything Sir Jack

had ever seen in it could be fetched back again or made to show itself anew, if only he had his Staff in his hand, and required it to be so. And as it happened, he remembered once reading words like what follow in it, and wondering what they meant—

Gin headless hart wail wicked wight,  
Bearn and beast to death are dight :  
Sad spae-wife sees . . .  
. . . showering spright.

Parts of the last two lines being wanting, or not to be made out.

'The headless hart,' 'the spae-wife,' the 'showering spright,' the terms all struck him as puzzling and strange at the time he noticed them. But now, the thought of 'the headless hart' took possession of his mind and fancy too ; and very little time was lost about going to his private treasure-chamber, opening the cabinet where he kept his choicest jewels, and taking out the magic Crystal, with his Staff duly held within his arms. Well, the mysterious rhyme appeared as soon as he desired it. But it was just as broken and incomplete as before. The Little Lady was applied to ; but she was no wiser than her lord. They appealed to the Eye ; but no enlightenment or help was to be got so. Even the Little Lady Red, after a long time spent in trying, could not hit upon the right thought; and consequently there was no answering thought from the Fairy Princess.

Sir Jack, restless and uneasy, went off again to look about the Hart Leap. Then he paid the Hermit another visit: nay even went and hunted up the old carline he had seen that other time. She knew herbs both hurtful and helpful ; she knew the looks and the power of the stars ; the moon's changes and how to use them, for good or for evil, were no secrets to her. People said she could do what she liked with the winds, and could sell strong charms to the seaman. There were some who said she could forecast what was going to happen to the people who went to consult her. Could she not give some advice or information about the matter which was puzzling Sir Jack so sorely ?

But no. Question as he would, he could obtain not so much as a hint from her. She even grew angry at being asked about the matter. ‘ Did he take her for a witch ? ’ she asked ; and ‘ did he want to get her burnt ; or perhaps have her tied hand and foot, right thumb to left toe, right toe to left thumb, and thrown into the deep black dub ? No, no ! No rune-wife was she. The rune-wife that was, she had gone long ago to her own place, and her own master too—anyhow she supposed so—when she herself was young. And her arts and her knowfulness had gone with her.’ And not a word more would she say.

Disappointed, and yet not quite so perplexed about what ought to be done next as when he went

on his errand, Sir Jack hied him home as fast as he could. In two minutes he was in deep talk with the Lady Red again. ‘There had been a rune-wife then. And the old carline had not said—perhaps could not say—that she was dead: only that she had ‘gone to her own place and her master,’ whoever he might be. But where had she had her dwelling? Who could remember either her name, or place, or fame, whether bad or good? At last, Sir Jack looked up with a sudden light in his eye, and the Little Lady looked back at him as if she knew all about it too; and in a moment the Eye in the Staff brightened and they knew they were right at last.

‘The Crystal! the Crystal!’ I am afraid Sir Jack forgot his dignity. The Giant-crusher, the Wolf-queller, the triumphant Victor over Wolf-reeve and all his pack, the Champion who had beaten the Grim Goat itself—even he played leapfrog with the chairs and settles, snatched kisses from his wife, staked his knighthood that he would master this secret, and do this deed of rescue too, however dread and parlous it might be.

The Crystal was brought forth and laid in Lady Red’s little hands held together, palms upwards; and for a space of seconds that lengthened on into minutes, Sir Jack’s body could be seen quite trembling with excitement. Vision after vision came before his wondering eyes, making him able to see

how things had happened. He saw the hunt with all its circumstances, the apparition of the strange rider with his sable steed, the exchange of horses, the closing pursuit of the suddenly distressed hart, the last gigantic bound, everything, even to the ride home cumbered with the Hart's head, with the three suggestions to dispose of the antlered head according to given troth. But at that point the series of visions came to an end. The Crystal seemed to have no more to reveal.

Sir Jack, however, was resolute, and determined to know more, and the thought, 'the spae-wife, the spae-wife,' impressed itself so strongly on his mind and will that presently dim clouds passed over the glossy face of the Crystal, which seemed to give place to volumes of water coming up from some source in hidden depths below. Almost he drew his face back, so real and threatening seemed the coming burst of a mysterious flood. But, continuing as intent as ever, and as resolute, in a few seconds of time he saw a female shape of unwonted form and feature—age in every line of her face, as if centuries had done their work in marking them, but a brightness still in her eye and mien. But what Sir Jack looked on more intently was the place wherein she was, and the matters around it, so that they might become the means of recognising and discovering it. He noted every feature, every object of the place minutely; and as he noted them one after another,

and described them to the Little Lady, her eyes brightened, and the perplexity passed out of her face, and when the Crystal clouded over again, and only a deep dark gloom rested on its surface, she cried to her expectant lord, ‘I know the place !’

And so she did. And so do I ; and that, living and going where she did before that cruel adventure with the pernicious wolf, it would have been strange if she had not known it ! But still, it was such a ‘dern cleugh,’ such a self-concealing as well as nature-hidden place, that I did not find it out myself for almost forty years after I thought I knew every corner and recess, and crevice even, as well as dingle and dell throughout the whole space round. I could tell you of the black, black rock of the entrance to the recess, of the arching waterfall, of the rushing stream from its foot pouring down the steep rock-broken slope below, of the cave behind the massive rock-face that seems to bar all entrance, but affords a grudging, riskful passage to the adventurous climber ; but I would rather say in as few words as I can that Sir Jack was speedily there, and face to face with the spae-wife. She seemed to know all his tale ; it needed no telling to her. Her words were very few, and they came very slowly and with a solemn sort of hush between them. They were : ‘GO, CONSULT THE CRYSTAL, THE ALL-KENNER, AND TROUBLE ME NO MORE.’

She added no other word. Sir Jack retired,

perplexed, but pondering. Loyal knight as he was, obedient to the orders sought for and received, he went straightway to the Crystal again. He willed the vision of the legend once more. It came, and after a space the illegible parts seemed to return little by little, shade by shade, until he was able to read clearly and fully—

Gin headless hart wail wicked wight,  
Bearn and beast to death are dight :  
Sad spae-wife sees, but n'as nae might :  
Rescue rests with showering spright.

Now here again was matter for thought, for perplexity and doubt. But this time it was the Little Lady the happy thought came to. The ‘showering spright’—had they not heard again and again of the whitish, mist-like, moist, nay dripping interference of the one who would fain have stopped the wilful wicked hunter's transfer of the severed head of the hunted Hart to his own high hall? Had they not heard of the disappearance of the head from the high hall when the man who had taken it lay dead, and of the manner of it? Was there not there, again, the whitish mist, the wet spray, the drizzily dropping of moisture, almost a rain-shower, yet not a rain-shower? Might not the being, whatever it was, mysterious but real, unseen yet proved by the absolute misty drizzling moistness, might it not have been, must it not have been, a spright, a weeping,

showering spright even? It was surely *there* the solution lay. But, if a sprite, if one of the same great Order, though not maybe of the same stock or kith with the Fairy realm and its folk, might it not, almost must it not, be recognisable by the Intelligence of the Staff?

I am afraid Sir Jack lost sight of his dignity again, for this time he hugged the Little Lady outright, so that she chided him gravely, but not altogether as if displeased. And it would not have been reasonable on her Little Ladyship's part if she had been either very stern or very cross. For she was no better herself. She actually ran a race with her lord, not running fairly of course—no 'female woman' ever does that when she has a chance of cheating the husband who is silly enough to be fond of her—but holding him back when he might have passed and outrun her, so that she might be the first to get to the sanctum of the Staff. And once there, and with her hands eagerly and lovingly upon it, three questions rushed into her mind so close upon one another—as it happened to her husband once before, when he was only Little Jack, you remember—and the answering thoughts came in like manner, tripping one another up rather than only treading on one another's heels. And yet, though there were three, and each distinct, it almost seemed as if there was but one answer for the three, for it was like one great big YES in the Little Lady's

mind rather than three ordinary - sized ‘yesses’ catching one another by the tail, so to speak.

‘It is YES, YES, YES,’ she cried to her husband, out of breath as much with laughing for joy as with running; ‘YES, YES, YES, don’t you hear?’ ‘What’s YES, YES, YES, you little female pixy? I’ll send for the wolf to gobble you up again, if you go on in this wild way.’ ‘Ah! but the wolf won’t dare to come where my worshipful lord is,’ she answered; and in the same breath she continued, ‘I asked “Was the ‘showering spright’ one of the realm of fairy folk? Was she under the Influence of the Eye? Would the Influence of the Eye be exercised in our behalf?”’ and there was a thumping big YES answering all three questions.

A little later, however, the Little Lady was very sober, very serious, very different from herself as she had been a moment or two before. For she had thought another ‘right’ thought, and had got another answer. She had thought in a moment of all they had heard the day they went to the place of trouble and distress; and the inquiry thought was, ‘But, it would be an adventure of perilous perplexity, difficulty, and danger?’ and it was a slow, serious thought-answer of YES that came back to her mind. One other thought rose quickly, and it was, ‘But my husband can achieve it?’ the answering Yes being again slow and deliberate. Her next thought was, ‘But it will take all his wisdom and experience and constancy,

and singleness of eye and hardihood?' Again a deliberate 'Yes.' 'Being brave, resolute, constant, his eye single, himself prompt to obey as to command'—she did not know how that thought came, but come it did—'he will succeed?' And to this the answer was as prompt and decided as to the first.

I should only tire you if I told you of all the questioning and inquiring that went on after this between Sir Jack, the Lady Red, and the Eye in the Staff. For one question that was rightly conceived, there were perhaps ten that were wide of the mark, or perhaps quite astray. No doubt that was to be expected when only 'right' questions, as we know, could be answered. But a conclusion was come to all the same, though it was, in all, weeks and almost months first, and the time was fast coming on again when the dreadful action and effect of the weird hunt was to be apprehended.

But by aid of the elf-maidens of the Glaisdale Swangs, already so helpful in the overwhelming of the Worm, and the flame-fays from the round Houe near Giant Wade's grave, who had done so much towards winning the difficult victory over the Church-grim Goat, Sir Jack had learned not only what the Showering Spright was, and the haunt she most affected, but something of the way in which she might be approached, and even a dim sort of a recognition of her presence; and when the new

moon was just newly beginning its visible course he knew he was to be in waiting at a given place, and that there and then he would hear what his enterprise was to be, and what the rules, and orderings, and conditions laid down would be. He knew already that he was to take his Staff: it would have been a strange oversight to neglect that. But as yet he knew no more.

The faintest glimmer of the tender young horn of the moon, and Sir Jack was, as he had been summoned to be, at the ancient haunt of the great Hart, not a stone's throw away from the Threllkeld. As he drew nigh he felt his Staff contract in length, as it had done once before previously to his entering the mail-clad effigy in the turret of the Castle near the Whorle Hill; and the next moment he was standing on the brink of the keld and saw the waters in such commotion, that, although in themselves clear as his Crystal at its most lucid times, they actually seemed to be quite turbid. At the same moment of time sudden thoughts rushed into his mind, just as when he was communing with the Eye, and it seemed as if some one with a voice that could be felt by the inner sense, though not heard by the ear, said to him: 'Be brave, be vigilant, be constant, turn to neither hand; whatever threatens, press forward, whatever persuades or seems to befall, always ON, straight on.'

In another second a white mist, damp, cool, even

moist, if not wet, enshrouded him, the gushing, whirling, troubled waters of the keld opened, and he saw a way to descend. Without a pause to think of anything but to be brave, constant, resolute, single-eyed, he leaped in. The waters seemed to seethe and thunder about his head, but he was not blinded, nor deafened, nor even wet. Almost before he knew, however, he found himself hemmed in with his back to the Giant's Chamber he knew so well in the old days, and Giant Grim himself in front, with menacing features, and creeping, feeling fingers. One yard nearer, and the hand would reach him surely. It would be silly to say that so sudden and so real a thing made no difference to Sir Jack, but one thought of the injunctions given such a short time before, set him on his defence, with his Staff, no longer shortened, in his valiant right hand. A thrust with all his might at the stooping savage face before him, and he was alone again! But not near the great cave in the Crag.

No. He was in a scanty glade in a great forest, and there was a company of ravening wolves encompassing him and old Grey-legs with the painful holes in his ears, and such a savage snarl, coming at him with open jaws and gleaming teeth. In a moment Sir Jack was on the neck of his Staff, and leaping at the wolf-reeve as in the great fight of yore. As the sharp steel point touched the grisly form, all vanished.

A brief pause, but a very brief one, and he was confronted by the Worm and threatened by the Erne. He could feel the horrid flaming breath of the dragon, and hear the terrible rush of the fowl ; and then—Oh, horror ! he saw his beloved Little Lady Red crossing the Castle drawbridge and the Worm in close pursuit as she darted back in the vain effort to reach the gate. But he thought ‘ To neither hand. Forward, whatever happens, or threatens, or persuades, or seeks to mislead.’ And he met the Erne, and it dissolved. But still the Worm, with the Little Red Lady in his awful coils, seemed as if making for his lair on the hill, right in his way, and yet staying to intercept him. Straight on he went. The voice of the Little Lady, crying to him for help, even was heard ; but the rush of the Worm as it launched itself out with fell onset on his advancing form, was met as before, and was gone before he knew how or where.

Then he saw a forest with launds and long alleys betwixt the trees, and Oh, joy ! there was the Hart’s head on that tree to the left, the object of all his anxiety, all his perilling of himself, all his one and great desire. Take it and win forth ! Why not ?

But no. Straight forward, constant and resolute, still ready to obey as to command. And the Hart’s head too vanished, and was seen no more. Surely this must be the last trial !

But no, again. For next he comes to a great

wall, like the cities of old, ‘high and walled up to heaven.’ But there was no gate, no stone missing out of the solid masonry even, and it lay right across his onward path if he continued to go straight on. All the same, on, straight on, he went. Ten steps distant, five, one ; and yet the solid wall stood before him. But he pressed on, thinking to breast the solid obstacle. And it gave way before him, seeming to fleet away in vapour on either side ; and he passed through. But as he entered on the new scene displayed—what a sight was there ! And what a turmoil !

For there was the huge Headless Hart itself, encircled by baying hounds, all eager to rush in, and yet all irresolute. Moreover, between himself and the circle of hounds were two figures, one menacing ; the other too frightful in its abject, shocking misery and suffering. Moreover, advancing directly upon him was the first, the great sable steed of the last hunt, with the rider in all his awful fashion as then, with a mighty black hunting-staff in his hand, behind him being the miserable wretch, the impious hunter, on his foundered steed, scarcely maintaining his seat, and looking as if he had been torn and lacerated by his own hounds.

Despite the menacing mien and the threatening staff of the mysterious rider, and the chafing and pawing of the great black horse, Sir Jack went steadily on, unheeding rather than unfearing. The

black steed did not give back : the rider seemed about to thrust, when in tones that seemed to match but ill with his stature, Sir Jack uttered one resolute order. ‘RETRO,’ he said ; and the black steed and his rider gave place. But a moment later, as if recovering himself, the wielded staff seemed to flash as if the rider were about instantly to pierce the undaunted little hero. Again the command ‘RETRO,’ and again a yielding backwards. A third time the rider rushed forward as if to charge, and a third time the ‘RETRO’ fell upon his unwilling ear. But this time the drawing back brought the horse and rider full upon the circle of baying hounds, and three of them were maimed by the terrible hoofs of the horse. Strange to say, they turned away from the Hart, and fawned at the feet of the fearless Sir Jack. And then he stretched out the staff with the last menacing order to the rider—BEGONE ! and before one could conceive how it had come to pass, Sir Jack and the Headless Hart were alone.

But the champion held straight on, the Hart following gently behind. And lo ! in the space of the closing of an eye, he found himself standing exactly where he was just after his plunge into the whirling cavity of the keld.

‘Bravely, constantly, and well done,’ seemed to be in Sir Jack’s mind, he knew not how, and the first words spoken by him were spoken now. They were—‘That’s no thought of mine.’ This was fol-

lowed by another thought, just in the same fashion as when he used to consult with the Staff. ‘No. It is mine, the Showering Spright’s.’ And then, as if it were really the Intelligence of the Eye actually speaking to him, he heard, or seemed to hear farther, ‘Yet another conflict waged in thoughtfulness, mindfulness, and manliness, and the deed of rescue is done.’

But besides this he understood :—though how the meaning was conveyed to him he could not tell :—still he understood that the next day, one hour before nightfall, he would see three Harts’ heads, one on each of the three trees marked on the last hunt night, and it would be for him to choose the true one and reject the false. If that were done he might in safety go to the Hart Leap thereafter, and await the parlous hour of the yearly visitation, and make his attempt to fit the severed head to the still bleeding neck. If he failed in his selection, then it would be with peril of life and being that he approached the weird place, and no rescue could after that be won for the sorely harassed people of the country around.

Resolute and constant as ever, he did not hesitate for a moment, and with a startling suddenness he found himself again in the whirling whelming centre of the keld, and emerging from it unwet as well as unharmed.

His first step, when daylight returned (all having

been imparted to his faithful Little Lady, and full counsel taken with her), was to go to the three trees named, and to make himself familiar with their exact position and aspect. It was not his first visit to them, however, as I daresay you have supposed : but now he had a special reason for noting all. Not a thing was there but he marked it ; the plants growing at the foot of either tree, the manner of their growth, the rough brushwood near, the masses of broken rock that lay thereby, he scanned all closely. The very leaves, brown and rustling, that had fallen before the last winter, the brackens with their goldened hues and shades—he carried the liveliest recollections of everything away with him ; and besides he carried —though in another fashion—a little bunch of his little lady's favourite flower, which he spied growing at the foot of one of the three trees, a bright golden floweret with veined and streaky leaves, red-brown and dark green intermingled. She called it, in her quaint conceit, 'troth-wyrt' ; for she said it reminded her of her lord, for he was always 'as good as his word.' And besides she knew it had a mystic virtue that did not belie the name she gave it in her pretty fancy.

The thought he had had of her in what must have been a time of such anxious considering and forecasting, touched her very deeply ; but the joy that sparkled in her eyes as he gave her the little posy was not the joy only of grateful love ; it was

deeper than that, and, for the time, even more masterful : for now she was sure, and not only because she relied so on his careful and diligent searching and knowfulness and downright pluck, but by a deeper and fuller insight and conviction, that his brave wisdom and discretion and valour would not be all he had to trust to.

Just before it was time for him to set forth on this last and hazardous enterprise, she might have been seen dividing the posy into two parts, and it almost seemed as if she laid a spray to this side for herself, and a spray to that side for another. But one who watched her closely would have seen that it was not quite, or only, so ; she was carefully, even anxiously, culling from the bunch before her, and the same observer might have noticed also that it was not the first of the two divided lots that casually came to hand, which she carefully bound together and placed in Sir Jack's jaunty cap with the plumes and the large pearl in front, mentioned before as you remember, and that she was even more heedfully careful than in the selection, in fastening it so securely within the clasp, that no mere chance or accident could occasion its loss. And one thing more I must tell you about this, and that is that her parting words to him as he went forth were—‘ My wise and valiant lord will not forget his wee wife’s posy if he be in a strait.’

Sir Jack was true to his time, and it did not take him, with his wonderful bearer, many minutes to visit all three of the trees. There was the Hart's head in each; each branch, each tine of the antlers the same in all three; the same full bold eye also, the same scars from former fightings, nay, even the same jagged gashes inflicted by the faltering hands of the over-worn hunter as he lamely endeavoured to cut the head off. At the foot of the trees there was, it is true, a difference observable to the sharp, scrutinising glances thrown upon them. There were black horse-shoe-shaped marks at each, as if the turf and growing plants had been scorched and seared. But the tree Sir Jack seemed to note least presented some slight differences to his observant eyes. The burnt marks were there, but still with a difference. He almost wondered whether they had been imprinted by a horse at all. If they had, how? Under what accompanying circumstances? Of course he bore clearly in his mind that no trick, no sham, no mere pretence could hold good, whether from the source he thought he had to contend with, or from any other, on branch or spray of the mystic rowan-tree; and the clumsy imitations—if they were imitations—of hoof-marks he saw there; and still more, if they were the actual footmarks of a horse, the proof they gave of reluctance or (it might be) inability to approach such a tree; only strengthened his conviction that

he must be fully satisfied about the other two heads before troubling over this.

To the other two trees, then, he returned again and again, from this to that, from that to this. But there was nothing to choose, nothing even to suggest a hint to direct his choice. Nay, if he thought the nearest looked a thought more real, and he then went and looked again at the farther one, why, it almost seemed that it looked less like reality than he had fancied a moment before. And so he suspected a trick, and found by actual trial it *was* a trick, and a mere delusion attempted to be passed upon him. But all the same a true choice seemed one impossible to make.

'In a strait,' he thought to himself, 'Bless her little heart! I thought I knew what she meant. I am sure I do now.' Ten seconds saw him back at the rowan-tree, on his Staff's neck, face to face with the Hart's head, and with his cap in his hand. With the Little Lady's posy he touched the head, and there was no shadow of changing, eyes, scars, antlers, jagged cuts, anything—all remained unchanged.

'All right,' he said to himself, and in ten seconds more he was at the second tree, the beech namely, and making the same experiments. A wicked light shone for a moment in the eyes of the false head, the jaggy cuts seemed seared and not fresh, the skin seemed dropping away from the bone of the skull.

'All right,' said Sir Jack again; 'I thought so.'

A few seconds more, and he is at the oak, the third tree. Barely had he applied the cap, or rather the posy, before the head bent down as if to charge him with levelled antlers. The suddenness of the action, and the threateningness of it, might well have startled one less constant and with less experience of the sort than Sir Jack, but it seemed not to discompose him much. He calmly alighted, reversed the Staff, and struck the sham head with the point. It was seen no more.

Returning to the second tree, the false head was already dying out of sight. The touch of the Staff completed its passage into nothingness.

But on coming to the rowan-tree he had no need to mount high in order to reach the head. It was there, but not at the very foot of the tree. It was yards away, and the last device of the foe was being tried. The head was immovable! It seemed to have taken deeper firmer root-hold in the solid earth than even the great sacred tree itself.

But Sir Jack had had this trick or difficulty to meet once before, and neither his memory nor his experience failed him. The Church-grim Goat had been weightier by far than a Hart's head only, and the application of the same lever as on that occasion turned the head easily over, and with the aid of the said lever, but now as a bearer,

Sir Jack bent his way not to the Hart Leap, but to the old lair of the Hart by the Threllkeld ; thus daring and precipitating the last conflict instead of dreaming of deferring it.

For he knew no fear, either before or now ; and he was not kept long in suspense. The Hart was there. The hounds and the hunter, with the thunderous treading of the great black steed bearing his awful rider, were heard in the lift, and with a mighty rush he made at his plucky little antagonist who was still bearing the head. Flames shot from the horse's eyes, fiercer ones from his nostrils ; the rider's staff seemed pointed with lightning. But Sir Jack did not give back an inch, hardly bested as he was with the fiery breath of the horse. The old stern order to give way issued from his lips, and as he spoke the 'RETRO,' the black steed recoiled among the hounds. Each one that was maimed came to Sir Jack's feet, and Sir Jack himself felt the welcome, grateful, cooling moisture he had made trial of once before, refreshing and restoring him.

A second time, more furiously than before, the steed and the rider came to the onset, the flames fiercer, the rush more terrible, but again only to be repulsed. Few of the hounds but were bruised and hurt and lamed, and Sir Jack was far from unscathed himself. But freshened and aided as he had been before, he was ready, though faint, for the third

onset, and it was not long in coming. Truly, it was a fearful one. It seemed as if hosts of yelling fiends came on as well as the fire-breathing courser and the lightning-armed rider; but Sir Jack's unflinching, full-sounding 'GO HENCE TO YOUR OWN PLACE' beat all back, and the hounds were all fawning on him as their master now.

And meanwhile, where was the Hart? Close by, and quiescent as before the onset had been made. Had the 'hunt been up,' it might have been different. But that was one of the things Sir Jack had foreseen, and framed his enterprise accordingly.

With faltering footsteps, scarcely supported even by his Staff, he drew near the Hart, and but a moment more and the head was seen once more reunited to the neck. Proudly rearing the royal antlers for a moment, the Hart knelt at the conqueror's feet, and the one-time hunter, who had been in the rear of the hounds during the fight, bent low in thankfulness for what had been achieved through the victory.

But Sir Jack the brave, steadfast, single-eyed, constant—what of him? The head was where he had striven and fought that it might be. But he did not know it was so. He rather slid down the Staff than fell prostrate; but prostrate he lay! his gay plume scorched away, his hair all burnt or crisped to powder, his jerkin like tinder, his cap blackened, and only the pearl and his little wife's

parting posy left without smell or sign of burning ! Was he dead ? Had the steadfast little hero sacrificed his life that he might do another brave and kindly action ?

But for the Showering Spright and the elves and fays who surrounded him, it might have been so. But the coolness and the moisture and the air from a thousand sweet gossamer-wings did for him what nothing else could have done ; and not even they, if the Little Lady Red herself had not been fetched in a moment by the grateful hosts of Fairy Land. It was she who directed, guided, applied every soothing, cooling, reviving dressing, and it was she who received her hero's first look of recognition, beaming, after a second or two of returning consciousness, with love and trust and confidence.

But the second glance was not to her or for her. And she wondered for a second, and then—oh, such a fear stabbed through her faithful heart ! Was it the gaze of unconsciousness, the last unconsciousness of all, in her darling's eyes ?

He turned his face to her again, and saw the distress and fear in her eyes, and understanding its cause, he used his returning strength to choose a sprig of her own posy, and place it himself in her head-dress ; and then she saw—O wonder of wonders!—she saw what he saw, the many elves and fays and other such-like beings around them ! She saw as he did, the faint, wavering, changing,

dissolving form of the Weeping Sprite of the Threll-keld : nay, she saw the Fairy Princess herself in all her delicate, moonlight, evanescent, but self-renewed beauty and nature-born glory. And the sight was almost too much for her mortal eyes ; and even his could not have borne it long.

And it was as she tried to speak her thanks, and Sir Jack's as well, and especially to the Fairy Princess, that she, the Princess herself, took the four-leaved plant of power from the Little Lady Red's head-dress and put it in her own, and fixing what was left of Sir Jack's posy in her bosom, so became, with all her train, invisible to mortal eyes ; but by no means departed from the society of the little hero and his dear little wife, or forsook her Staff-home, or repined that her full freedom was yet for a little while delayed.

But the freedom came at last, though perhaps we are not ready to think that it was an occasion among the Fairies themselves rather for weeping than for congratulation when it did really come. But Sir Jack the valiant and wise, and still more the faithful, steadfast, resolute, devoted, died at last, and was buried ; and from that time to this the mourning of the Fairy-host is recorded by the prettiest, grace-fullest, meekest little flower that stars these northern wilds. Wherever a fairy tear fell—and the places are many—there sprang this lovely delicate flower, which moved even the learned but unsympathetic

Swedish botanist to something like loving admiration, and there it grows still ; yes, even in the wild ravine not far from the Spae-wife's later home it grows. The Little Lady Red also ceased to be, closely following her gallant little lord, and they were laid together no great way from where the Giant-crusher's first exploit was achieved. Stranger people who go and rest on a huge four-square rock there, and wonder at its verdure and strange floral beauty, in the midst of one of the most beautiful scenes in all this one-time fairy-haunted country, and think it strange that the purple ling and trailing blaeberry and delicatest wood sorrel should, on such a surface, keep so green and continue so luxuriant, little think that fairy hands placed that squared mountain mass over the grave of the grieved-for little pair, and gave it its wondrous mystic verdure and fulness of growth, and still less that the Showering Spright even yet takes heed to maintain it in all its lovely greenery. The wolves are gone, and the Giants and Trolls are no more ; but some of us like still to remember our own Little Jack and his sweet little Lady, erstwhile called Red-Riding-Hood ; and most of us remember them best *there*.

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